

A Plain Discourse
OF
The UNRIGHTHOUSNESS
And
FALSE ACCUSER.



is soberly, and in the fear of the Lord,
ought to light, and tender to the ex-
amination of the Upright in Heart, the
Singer of that Pamphlet, intitled,
The LEPER Cleansed:

Published by Richard Ballamy of *Tewkesbury*.

As also,

A clear Vindication of the *Pamphlet*
and PRACTICES of the *Church* by
charged, from those Reproaches
upon them, under the notion of *A*

Published by *Robert Steele*, and *Abraham Cather*, Servants of
Church, among his dearest People.

Printed by *John Smith*, at the *Printers*, in the *Street*,
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The *Author* of this *Discourse* is *John Smith*,
of the *Church*, in the *City*, in the *Year* 1711.
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

To the Reader.

Courteous Reader,



*T*is not without a multitude of disadvantages on our hand, that the ensuing Defence cometh into open view, arising, not only from the Reproach that is on us, and the weakness that is in us of saying any thing worthy of the cause, which in the main we desire to plead: but withal (so say no worse) from the infirmity of the age we live in: the generality of men being led into the affecting and dislike of things, rather by tradition, and upon the credit of such as they reverence, then upon a right judgement of matters in their own evidence. Yet are we not discouraged from sending this Testimony forth, though it hath neither Patron, nor Approbation; but only Truth to be its Shield and Buckler: being clear in this, that it was not an Affectation to appear in publick, that hath led us forth to this Undertaking; but a necessity of vindicating the Churches of Christ that we walk withal, from such notorious slanders: as also, of delivering the Readers of that Pamphlet from the manifest abuse it puts upon them, exposing them to a temptation of giving credit to very many untruths and mis-representations of things, and therein to a disgust against the Way, and all that walk therein: which is the main design thereof.

The Book was indeed by many thought unworthy of an Answer, for a time; but seeing it grew into repute by the countenance of some that are accounted men of worth, who scattered it abroad as an undoubted Evidence of Truth; we have thought good to give men a warning at present against such artifices to deceive, that for the future they may be the more cautious of giving credit to invectives of this nature, which will not be much our care hereafter, to make Replies unto; as having it in our hearts to expect many such trials from men of perverse minds, apostatizing from the Truth in this hour of temptation.

That

That the presenting this to thee, comes to our lot who dwell at some distance from the place where these affairs were transacted, is occasioned from our observation, how that the Reproach of this, falls heavier upon us in the Countreies, then it dash on them in that Town, where the advantages of informing the Enquirers, and clearing the accused, are at hand: by reason whereof, that people being less sensible, have been the less careful of performing this service, which might seem more properly appertaining unto them.

Yet neither doth our distance of place render us incapable of giving thee the true state of things, in that our selves were eye and ear-witnesses to the Proceedings of that Congregation in the two principal matters of fact he insisteth on, (viz.) with William Facy, and this Richard Bellamy; and for the other Occurrences, have taken all possible care to obtain such a perfect account of things in the naked truth of them, as might render us capable of giving forth the Narrative with all exactness.

In the whole, however we had in our eye the Readers accommodation, and therefore endeavoured to be as brief as possible, in matters that may be so expressed; yet may it not be reasonable to think, we can clear our selves from such an heap of slanders, in as few words as he may cast them on us; especially, we have been enforced to be somewhat large in giving our understanding about what he lays down as grounds from Scripture, convincing him of Infants right to Baptism, which he offers as a main hinge on which he turned from us; and thence loads us with the common name of Infamy, that we pass under among the sons of men. Our Method is to follow our Accuser step by step; wherein we repeat his words: and have willingly omitted nothing that deserves an Answer, although it be against our selves: in the whole, being desirous to approve our selves to him that searcheth the hearts: with him we leave the undertaking, to dispose of it and us, and at his pleasure: to him be Glory for ever. Amen.

ERRATA.

Page 8. line 24. for *Att.* 2. 34. read 39. page 9. line 49. for *hating*, read *suiting*.

A plain Discovery of the Unrighteous Judge, and false Accuser.

To all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whom these may concern: Greeting.

Precious and Beloved,



T is not our purpose to entertain yee with the Narrative of the manner of our receiving the truths of Christ in which we stand, or of the preparations of Spirit, the Lord hath given in order to this work, and by the help of this attire to allure your pious minds to our Cause and Persons. These vails have sometimes (it may be) obtained their ends, but being grown the common vizour of every ill-favored cause; we judge them not only impertinent to the matter in question, but also unfit for us to publish of our selves; and no less unmeet to be imposed on you whom we write not unto as ignorant and simple; but as such who can discern the things that differ in their own qualities.

Richard Bellamy, since he was cast out of Communion with us at *Tiverton*, (or whoever he be personated by him) hath printed his book against us. Called, *The Leper Cleansed*. The title page tells you, of what the book is comprehensive. Therein amongst severall laudable matters spoken of himself, he pretends to lay open the *Anabaptists*, and their unchristian wayes, and wiles to deceive; and seemeth desirous to be thought a person able to make great discoveries and conquests, as having been throngly versed in the Doctrine and Practises of the whole body of that party by his nigh two yeeres converse with them in society amongst our Brethren in *Tiverton*. But all these terrible flourishes notwithstanding, we herewith tender this man and his writings against us to your examination, and the true state of our Doctrine, Way, and Practise, as it stands accused and judged by him. And if indeed we be convicted for cunning deceivers, lyers in wait, hypocrites, enemies to Godliness, enemies to Magistracy and Ministry, as he hath informed the world, then indeed

deed leave us, as he hath perswaded you: But if these appear to be the unrighteous accusations of a person puffed up, at best, with the heat of his own passions, then take heed and beware of that spirit which hath acted this man, and led him aside according to the pride of his own heart, to play both the unrighteous Judge, and false Accuser, against the way of God wherein we stand.

Friends, We intend not in this defence to justify any evil person, or matter for our advantage; we are assured we have in hand, a cause of God that needeth not, save to be stated in its own simplicity: wherein we shall endeavour to be faithfull with you, being made willing by the grace of God to stand and fall with it. The persons of men we shall not care to overvalue, or presume to detract, but as men stand approved or disapproved of the truth to give them their due: and particularly for this our Judge and Accuser, we shall cast behind us the filth of his invectives without retaliation; his impertinencies and absurdities, as much as may be, we shall passe over with silence, that what may be found in him to bear upon the mayn cause, may be dealt withal.

Accuser.

It may seem strange to all that know me, to see me in print: and if any that see me thus appear, judge that it is my mayn businesse to vindicate my self, they are mistaken; I am partly driven to this by the irregular proceedings of those who have judged me as an offender, and yet would not give me liberty to speak for my self: so that I am enforced to speak this way, or to justify them by my silence: but that which most of all prevails with me, is, First to give glory to God in acknowledging his mercy, who hath opened my eyes, and shewed me the error of my way. 2. I judge it my duty to labor to undeceive all the simple and plain hearted. 3. I think it as necessary to discover the hypocrisie of some that ly in wait to deceive, and by cunning insinuations and pretences to draw aside many souls, to their own loss, if not to their destruction.

Answer.

It is not much that we should think needfull to speak to this paragraph: only whereas he begins, *It may seem strange to all that know me, to see me in print;* In this the Accuser speaketh right, for we have ground to judge, he doth but personate the contrivance of other men.

Who have judged me as an offender, and yet would not give

me liberty to speak for my self. We shall hereafter meet our Accuser in this his false allegation in its due place.

I think it as necessary to discover the hypocrisie of some that ly in wait to deceive, &c. Whom he intends under these expressions; as hypocrites, lyers in wait, &c. he manifests in the title page; how well he proves us to be such, appeareth by the sequels of his book, where we shall have full opportunity to examine it. He proceeds,

Accuser.

It is notoriously known to all the Inhabitants of Tyverton, that I was deeply engaged in that way, which is commonly known by the name of Anabaptists; yea so far, as that I thought I was bound to oppose all that dissented from that way, as being antiebristian: & so zealous was I to promote that interest, that I forsook my relations, and left my fathers house, not caring for any society, but such as were for that way; refusing to joyn in prayer with such as differed from me in that, though otherwise godly: thus I continued for the space of nigh two yeers, but at last God was pleased to cause me to reflect upon my self and wayes, and by some speciall providences (of which by and by I shall give an accompt) he made me willing to stand upon the ways and see, and enquire for the way of the Lord; for untill this time I was so filled with prejudice against the publick Ministry, that I refused all conferences and debates, with any (though offered with never so much mildnes) concerning the way in which I was; or if I did at any time admit of any, it was to defend, and not to examine it.

Answer.

All this rash and uneven walking while under this profession, that this man makes discovery of himself in (for we should not have judged it worth the while to have given such a character of him) it easily appeareth to have sprung from the youthfull vanity and lightnes of his own spirit, not from any principle owned among us; nor was the observation of it any comfort to us, in that he was severall times reproved for sundry of those very things.

Accuser.

But now God having put some check upon my spirit, I began to lay things in the balance; and observing another people in this place, walking under Ordinances, and joyned with the publick Ministry: such thoughts as these would come in some-

times; We say we are in the way of God. and they say they are in the way of God: may not I all this while be mistaken? Though I often opposed such thoughts as these, yet they returned upon me by my observation, for I could not but take notice, that those I walked withall, were looser, both in their Principles and Practises, then those I dissented from.

Answer.

Then I began to lay things in the balance, &c. Those unsteady revolutions of thoughts, always learning, never coming to the acknowledgment of the truth; argue a minde unstable as water, and therefore cannot excell. *I could not but take notice that those I walked with, were looser both in their Principles and Practises then those I dissented from.* We shall not in this place insist on the weakness of the Argument, urged from the practises of some persons, to the error of their profession. But to the generall charge, we say: That, if to state the everlasting Covenant, made and given by the Lord himself for the redemption of sinners, and the efficacy of the Ministration thereof upon the free grace of God in Christ alone; and so stated, to minister the same, for the calling and gathering of the elect, the true seed in that Covenant given unto Christ, for the bringing them into visible communion with Christ their head, and each with others: If to require a proof of the truth of this work before admission into such visible communion and fellowship, with an open profession upon such admission to take up the cross of Christ, and follow him, in doing and suffering his whole will, as himself requireth: If to administer such Gospel Ordinances, as import the peculiar privileges of the children and family of the Son of God, to persons so approved, and no others: If to acknowledge and believe the everlasting Kingdom and Priesthood of Jesus Christ, in providing for, governing and perfecting his people, although a feeble flock; and therefore set at nought by them that are full and at ease: If while these principles and the like unto them, are in our eye, the mark we contend to reach unto (yet through the infirmity of our flesh, finding our selves to our grief often beneath them) by the grace of God in his Ordinances, in bearing one anothers burdens, in admonition and exhortation with patience, whiles there is hope, and other spirituall proceedings, as the cause requireth; our manifold weaknesses notwithstanding, such indulgence and grace we obtain with and from our God, that not only support is ministred, but also

Mat. 16. 24.

Luk. 14. 26.

so (to the praise of his admired goodness be it said) a progress is made among us from faith to faith: and this further token of his presence we find among us: That usually the most carnall, worldly, and unruly, are soonest offended: but the sober and humble hearted joyce with us. If these principles and practises, and the just consequences attending them, commonly avowed by us, be looser then what the accuser doth imbrace, and in his own person follow, the day of tryal wil make evident.

Accuser.

I found them slight in their thoughts of the Sabbath, and that they observed that day rather out of policy, then out of conscience; nor so much to sanctifie the name of God, as to keep their hearers from attending the publick Ministry. They spake slightly of those that walked strictly and closely with God in duty, saying, that all the Religion of such lay in duties, but theirs was spiritual. I further observed that their families were without prayer generally, their children without instruction: and surely their constant neglect of duties in their families, made me grow very careless of mine in private. The consideration of these things made me begin to enquire, whether this were the truth I professed: from henceforth I resolved to consider what was objected against the way I was in, and to weigh the Arguments I had slighted, because I saw many serious godly people did live in the profession and practise of that which I opposed, &c.

Answer.

I found them slight in their thoughts of the Sabbath, &c.
What wormwood and gall hath he mingled to us in this desperate and bold accusation and judgment, it being full well known to all observers, that both in preaching, printing and practise, all the Baptised congregations with whom we have communion in *England, Scotland and Ireland*, do hold out a constant profession, that in conscience to the Lord, we do hold our selves bound to keep the first day of the week, called the Lords day, holy to the Lord; and that the right celebration of this day consisteth in a spiritual communion with God, our own souls, and each with other in all gospel-Ordinances, and other Christian offices, of goodness and mercy to man and beast, as opportunity and Christian prudence shall require. And this young man wel knoweth, that this very congregation in *Tiverton* proceeded with a member as worthy of just censure, only for that his servant, though without his knowledge, took a cloth upon this day out

of the rack where it was on drying : and moreover , himself was present when the Church appointed it as their judgment to meet together constantly about six of the clock in the morning, to the end that the day might be spent more intirely for the Lord.

They speak slightly of those that walked strictly and closely with God in duties, saying, that all the Religion of such lay in duties; but theirs was spiritual. That there is a Pharisaical strictness in polishing the outward-man by the traditions and inventions of men, and not of Christ; and a formal strictness in the letter of a command, and both these desperate enemies to the Gospel of Christ, we affirme; but we loath, abhor, and detest, the application of these expressions, to the slighting of any duties, or exercises of godliness, or any persons that in faith and a good conscience, walk closely with God in them. That our selves might be built up, and be helpful each to build up other in the faithful exercise thereof without distraction, hath been one main motive to draw us into the union and communion in which by the grace of God we stand, and is a part of that promise, which we through the Lords assistance (the God in Covenant with us) doe declare and undertake when we receive the right-hand of visible fellowship together. As for the ground of this mans report in this particular, after the most diligent search that could be made, we can finde out no just colour he hath for such an accusation, but that himself hath used the like expressions of some, as hypocrites and formalists, &c. whom he now cleaveth unto : for which he was then faithfully reproved.

Their families without prayer generally, their children without instruction, &c. What shall we reply to this bold man? the Lord knoweth we condemn, abhor and detest the guilt of this accusation, we faithfully exhort unto these Christian duties, we reprove their neglect; and are in a readines to pass publick censures upon the careless and wilfull transgressours of them, as persons offending against plain precepts: The Lord knoweth we long and labour to have our houses as churches of Christ, and our children in submission with all gravity, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; yet being jealous that several in Tiverton, and elsewhere, may not have been so careful in the performance of their duty in these things, as the law of the Lord requireth of them, we shall take occasion, even from the reproach cast upon us by the accuser, to make a more strict enquiry after all neglects of that kinde, trusting the

the Lord will help us to beare yet a more effectual testimony against them, and help them and us unto a more thorow reformation.

Because I saw many serious godly people did live in the profession and practice of that which I opposed. We acknowledge this passage to have more resemblance of grace in it, then most we can finde in all the book besides. As for his tossing and running from place to place upon matter of disputes, and one while railing on this party, and then as fiercely reviling others, it is the common badge of the drunken spirit of this perverse generation; but to ponder the paths of the truly Godly upon well-digested and clear evidences of the grace of God dwelling in their hearts, we cannot but commend, and put a due estimate upon: and we know that this very consideration, hath been an introductive to a farther work of God, which hath not left some precious soules till they have taken up the visible profession of the Gospel in which we stand. But let us beware that while we be tender to the Godly, we prove not cruel to Christ and to our own soules: the godly in all ages have been liable to sad mistakes, and stiffly persisted in them, notwithstanding they wanted not such as have admonished them of their miscarriages: we can hardly be strangers to this truth, while the presses and the pulpits in the three nations, breath out such sharp contentions among our opposites themselves, in sundry points of great moment; and therefore let us follow the godly as they follow Christ, and no farther; and withal, take heed of making out a judgment while we are prejudiced with personal infirmities, or entangled, with wordly advantages or disadvantages, but draw our selves and the matter in question, into a naked simplicity before the Lord, to receive the pure impressions of Scripture-authority, as the supream judg of all controversies, and no other. But mark the condition of the person, our judg and accuser, before and since his defection, as his own pen hath painted him forth, that notwithstanding his pretensions of seeking and finding God, you will finde the man not so much in the joy and love of a spirit bettered by his change, as in the old gall of a deadly bitterness from first to last.

Accuser.

And upon serious inquiring into the word, and earnest seeking of God, it pleased the Lord to satisfie me in the truth, and in particular touching these two controverted truths. (1.) That the Covenant of grace stands now in force to the children of beleevers under
the

the Gospel. (2.) That this is a sufficient ground by Gods appointment why the children of believers should be baptized. This is evident from many Scriptures in the New Testament, which the Anabaptists have endeavoured often to obscure. I shall onely mention one which was useful to me, *Acts* 2. 34. The promise is to you, and to your children. The Anabaptists have laboured to darken this truth by perswading the world to believe that children have no right to the promise till they are actually called, which they would infer from the last clause of the fore mentioned Text. But by considering, I saw their mistake in the Text [*call*] hath no relation to children, but to them afar off.

Answer.

We account it not our concernment, nor worth our while, to inform the Reader, with what might be truly said to discover the falshood of the accusers plausible insinuation, by what direct meanes, and with what mature consideration he digested those grounds of satisfaction: but letting him pass with his desired applause, shall only crave the exercise of Christian patience while we follow him, laying down in plainness our perswasions about the severals by him hinted at in this point of Baptisme; he first gives you two propositions as the ground of his satisfaction.

First, that the Covenant of grace stands now in force to the children of believers under the Gospel. Secondly, that this is a sufficient ground by Gods appointment why they should be baptized. Many mistakes usually perplex the point in question for want of a right understanding of the termes made use of: which inconvenience we shall endeavour to remove out of the way, before we goe farther: and the terme or expression that comes first to hand to be explained is [*the Covenant of Grace.*] This terme is applied to signifie,

1. The Covenant of Grace in its own nature, singly, and universally considered.

2. It's applied to signifie the manner of its administration, according to divine institution.

As to the first signification the Covenant of Grace signifieth. That great mystery of the mercy of God in Christ, wherein the Father hath established Jesus Christ his Son, the head of all things, and given unto him a blessed seed of the Sons of Men, to be by him, and with him heires of the glorious inheritance of the grace

grace of God, and the blessed consequences thereof, against all possibilities of miscarriage, according to his eternal purpose. This Covenant was by the Lord himself first published to man in Paradise, *Gen. 3. 15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* This Covenant is spoken by the Prophet *David; Psal. 2. 7. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* *Vers. 8. Aske of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.* *Vers. 9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potters vessel.* This Covenant, is it which *Isaiah* publisheth and preacheth, *Chap. 42. and 49. and elsewhere frequently.* This Covenant God calls his everlasting Covenant, being still one and the same immutable from everlasting to everlasting. This Covenant was it which at sundry times, and after divers manners, under divers signes, figures, and types, by promises and prophecies was renewed and ratified with the blessed Patriarches, *Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Sem, Melchisedeck*, and with the Fathers *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; with *Moses*, with *David* the king, and with the Prophets, before the coming of Christ: and it is the same Covenant, which openly and plainly was brought to light, and revealed in all the mysteries of it by *John the Baptist*, the Lord *Jesus*, and his Apostles, which still continueth to be ministered in the Church, and shall continue without change to the worlds end. This Covenant hath one Spiritual Father, which is Christ, *Isaiah 9. 6. The mighty God, the everlasting Father*; and one spiritual seed, *Psal. 22. 30. A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation.*

The Covenant of grace as it signifieth the manner of administration, according to divine appointment, may be thus described. It doth contain the whole and every part of that instituted worship whereby God doth ordinarily bring about, the purposes of the everlasting Covenant, that is, to set Christ upon his throne, and to gather to him the seed given him by his Father: And the Covenant of grace under this acceptation is not one and the same alwayes, but hath passed under many great alterations and changes: the Lord having his ordinances and appointments, to the persons,

2;
The Covenant
ministering.

seasons, and workes, which he had to doe, as it seemed good to his heavenly wisdom: and therefore all the force and authority of the Covenant of grace, considered under this head, to wit, according to the administration of it, dependeth intirely upon the law of its institution, and is in force as that law directeth, and not otherwise.

And the Covenant of grace in this sence stands distinguished in Scripture, under two known heads, respecting two seasons, the season before the ascension of the Son of God, and the season which followed after.

The ministring
before Christ.

The administration of the Covenant of grace, before the coming of the Son of God, passed under very great alterations and changes, for the first two thousand years from *Adam* to *Abraham*, the ordinances and forme of worship then in practise, and other occasional figures, having respect unto the mystery of the everlasting Covenant, and the chosen and rejected seeds therein considered, was a ministry dignified, with as eminent and glorious saints, as any the book of God recordeth: and although this ministry were also for the nature of it, the same with the law of *Moses*, and proportioned to it, and afterward fell in with it, yet in all this long track of time, there was no distinguishing ordinance to be administered to infants of believers, or any known doctrine to that purpose, notwithstanding the far-fetcht notions, which some have wandered after, to finde it out from that passage of the Sons of God and daughters of men, *Gen. 6. 2.* Which very probably was found in the family of holy *Seth*, in that time of universal corruption of all man-kinde. Nor in that other of the saving of *Noah*, and his family, in the Ark; neither of which nor any other thing, was, or was deemed to be an ordinance established in the Church, to be administered in infancy.

True it is, at circumcision it began, and by the law of *Moses* circumcision was taken in with the other institutions which went before it, and there it received its full entailment, and became the head-ordinance of the Levitical ministry. This administration of the Covenant of grace is usually called in Scripture the old Covenant, or the first Covenant. *Heb. 8. 7. For if that first Covenant had been faultlesse, &c.* Ver. 13. *In that he saith a new Covenant, he hath made the first old.* It is also usually called the law, *Rom. 4. 13, 14. For the promise that he should be the heir of the*

the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith: for if they which are of the law, (to wit, the people of the old Covenant) be heirs, faith is made void. (to wit, the people of the new Covenant,) And Heb. 10. 1. *The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, &c. Gal. 4. 21.* Ye that desire to be under the law, doe ye not hear the law?

This Covenant, while it stood, although it were very glorious, yet the Spirit of God never exalted it in dignity above the degree of an Handmaid, appointed for the time being to minister to the everlasting Covenant, and then to be utterly cast out of the Church, together with her seed according to the flesh, whom the Apostle calleth servants, and not sons, Gal. 4. 7. All which we have prophetically, yet plainly and fully instanced in the family of Abraham, under the type of the Gospel-Church, under the persons of Hagar and Ishmael, Gen. 21. 10, 11, 12. *Cast out this bond-woman, and her son; for the son of this bond woman shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac, &c.* The mystery of this Scripture the Apostle unvaileth at large, Gal. 4. 22, -- 31. Where he sheweth that the two women, vers. 24. under an allegory, are the two Covenants, the bondage Covenant, and the free Covenant, vers. 25, 26. that is, the law and the Gospel; and that the Isaacs were the true seed of the Gospel-administration, ver. 28. called the children of the promise: and saith the Apostle, such was himself, and all the Churches of Galatia, to whom he wrote, vers. 31. Not borne after the flesh as was Ishmael, vers. 23. but borne where there were no possibilities of nature, to bring forth a seed: even by the power of God, and spirit of adoption, vers. 5, 6, 7. By a mother which in the other respect was altogether barren and desolate, vers. 27. *Rejoyce thou barren that bearest not, &c.* that is, there was in no such marriage-Covenant, whereby children should be brought forth unto her, as were the children of the former marriage-Covenant; but in that respect being left absolutely destitute, should yet have many more children, then that Covenant had which brought forth children by fleshly generation.

Again, this old administration, the Spirit of God. Heb. 8. 5. *Termed a service unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.* And Chap. 9. vers 9. *a figure for the time then present.* And in Chap. 7. v. 19. and cha. 10. v. 1. *That it made nothing perfect.*

perfect. And that it was by the Lord Jesus blotted out as an handwriting of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross, *Col. 2. 24.* There ended that Covenant; there expired the law, the force and authority upon which that administration stood. And there was the prophesie, *Gen. 21. 10.* of casting out the seed according to the flesh (never more to claime a priviledge upon that account) absolutely accomplished and fulfilled. And therefore the children of the promise are counted for the seed, *Rom. 9. 8.*

Two hard shifts are made use of by some to avoid the evidence of these, and the like scriptures against infant-baptisme, which might be alleged to the same effect.

Obj. 1. First, they say, that what hath been alledged from *Gen. 24.* and *Gal. 4.* Tenderth only to prove, that the legal Covenant and carnal seed, as it stood priviledged by that Covenant, was to give way to the free Gospel-Covenant.

Rep. 1. To this we say, That the Covenant of the law, and the covenant made with *Abraham*, in the letter of circumcision, had with them an eminent renovation, and ratification of the everlasting covenant; yet were both of one and the same nature, authority, and use, *John 7. 23. Acts 15. 5.* Although not given together; as neither were the ordinances of sacrificing; and all alike signified, and served unto the same heavenly mystery of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

2. We close with them herein, and crave no more from these Scriptures then the total abolishing of the legal covenant, with all its appurtenances, of which circumcision was a chief, as hath been proved.

3. We say that the exclusion of the seed, according to the flesh, upon the account of the exclusion of that covenant, excludes the seed according to the flesh for ever, because it can claime a standing by no other right.

Obj. 2. It is also suggested, that the Scriptures alledged unto the point of the two covenants, and the two seeds in them respectively priviledged, is not to be understood of any others intended by the seed of the free woman, then of real or invisible saints, and not of the visible subjects of the Gospel Church.

Rep. To which we say, That if the Spirit of God hath made use of these discoveries as a standard and rule, to reforme and conformance
visible

visible Churches unto, both in their doctrine and practise : and that also upon occasion of the corruptions, which by the imposing of the legal covenant and natural seed had invaded them, as is most evident to have been the case, *Acts 15. 5, --- 10.* If no such matter at all concerning invisible saints, any otherwayes considered then in visible Church-order, be to be found in the scope and intention of the Apostle; which also is evident: Then let no person give up their reason and understanding to such impertinent and incoherent interpretations, against the plain drift of the Spirit of God, and the work of reformation therein pursued. And thus much of the Covenant of Grace, before the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh: wherein we would not be understood, in what hath been said touching the abrogation of the legal covenant, to teach the abrogation of any moral Doctrine or Precept.

The last administration of the covenant of grace, usually called the new covenant, is that which was established by Jesus Christ at his coming, which was altogether of another nature to that which went before it. This was not a covenant ministering or serving to any doctrine above or beyond it self, as was the other, *Heb. 10. 1.* But this was the mystery of the grace of God it self plainly administered: a mystery hid from ages and generations, *Colos. 1. 26. Ephes. 3. 8, 9.* It was under a vaile or behind a curtain till Christ himself came to reveale it; and the whole scope of the doctrine preached by Christ and his Apostles, runs quite beside the pretended priviledg of the seed after the flesh, and is placed upon the seed after the spirit, as being indeed the true seed, who were really sated by God in the priviledg of the everlasting covenant through their new-birth, and not otherwise. Mark the preaching and practise of *John the Baptist, Matth. 3. 8, 9. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within your selves, We have Abraham to our father.* Observe the doctrine of Christ, upon what foundation he builds the Gospel-Church, *Matth. 16. 18.* Upon the profession of actual faith in the Son of God. The birth-priviledg cannot be squared by this rule, to have a place in this building. Again, *Isaiah 54. 13.* Prophesying of the Gospel-Church, sayeth, *And all thy children shall be taught of God,* is applyed by Christ, *John 6. 44, 45.* with this introduction, *No man can come to me except the father which sent me draw him, &c.* There is no coming unto Christ, nor fellowship in

The ministry
by Christ.

in the Church upon birth-priviledge any longer. Again, *Luke 14. 26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, &c. he cannot be my disciple*; here is no roome for birth-priviledg to make disciples to Christ, or uppon that title to come unto him. Gospel-priviledges are a part of the Gospel-inheritance, and follow Gospel-sonship. *If sons, then heires, Gal. 4. 7. Rom. 8. 17.* Now Gospel-sons are not born such, of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God; *Of his own will begat he us, James 1. 18.* And therefore the visible profession hereof must be the common principle to constitute visible children of the Gospel-covenant, under the administration of Jesus Christ, by whom grace and truth was administered, not flesh and figure.

Thus much of the first terme, that came to hand in our opponents first proposition [the Covenant of Grace.] The next expression to be explained, is [stands now in force.] It seemeth to us an hard kinde of expression, to say, That *the Covenant of Grace stands now in force*: as if it were capable of being or not being in force, with respect to seasons: but thus we understand our opponents meaning by this terme, that it signifieth a person to be comprised, and stated in the covenant of grace by God.

Another expression craving explanation, is, [the children of beleevers under the Gospel] which in our opponents intention, we take not to be such children as were begotten unto the faith by beleevers, and in that respect came under that appellation, of which we read, *1 Cor. 4. 15. 3 Epist. Job. ver. 4.* But we understand it of the children begotten of the bodies of beleevers; and in the same sense and no other, we our selves crave to be understood throughout this Reply, by the terms of carnal, or natural seed, seed after the flesh, seed of the birth-priviledge: which caution we premise, that these terms made use of by us be not applyed to signify some evil qualification.

The second proposition needeth not to have any thing farther said unto, it being dependant upon the first, and must stand and fall with it.

These things premised, we return answer to these his two propositions, *viz.* (1) that the Covenant of grace stands now in force to the children of beleevers under the Gospel. (2) That this is a sufficient ground by Gods appointment, why children of beleevers should be baptized.

And first, We say, If by this term [the Covenant of Grace] in his first proposition, be meant the Covenant of Grace in our first acceptation of it; and by [the children of believers under the Gospel] be meant their natural seed, as before explained: Then we deny the first Proposition, because the Covenant of grace in that sense, is not in force to any, upon any other consideration, then as they are in Christ. Then also is the second Proposition to be denied; because God hath made no such appointment, that Baptism should be admittred to persons upon the single ground of election.

If the Covenant of grace be meant of the covenant of grace ministering, according to our second acceptation: then, if it be also meant to be in force. &c. by vertue of some institution, appointed of God before the coming of Christ; we deny the second proposition, that that is any sufficient ground by Gods appointment of Baptizing infants now; such institutions being vanished with the other shadows.

If by the Covenant of Grace, be meant the Covenant of grace as it is now ministered since the coming of Christ; we also deny the same proposition in this particular, that there can be found no such appointment instituted by Christ, or any of his Apostles, for the baptizing of the children of believers.

Last of all, we say, That the Covenant of Grace is always in force to the elect as such, called or uncalled, infants or aged; it is also in force to all sorts of persons, as it is a doctrine by Gods appointment to be published, for the calling of sinners to repentance: but we utterly deny that there is any thing at all in force by the covenant of grace, or by any appointment of God, for the baptizing of infants.

The ordinance of Baptism, is a part of the instituted worship of the Gospel, and all the force and authority that it hath upon the Conscience in point of practise, is to be derived from the plain and express law and word of God, by which it is made an Ordinance of the gospel: and that in point of practise must be the Rule not to be swerved from. God hath been very jealous of all his Ordinances, to keep them exactly to his own methods and manner, in the practise of them: and the nature of man is very presumptuous to be interposing and meddling. Let us not forget that of *Heb. 8. 5. Exod. 25. 9.-40.* See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount: all instituted worship, must be conformed

formed to the heavenly pattern.

But to follow our opponent in the proof of his propositions. *This is evident* (saith he) *from many Scriptures in the New Testament*, and so gives you an instance in that one, *Acts* 2. 39. and then fairly leaves you to make the application as you please, without managing his authority to prove any one point or term, in either of his propositions. But the next work we find him upon, is an impertinent, confused accusation, that the *Anabaptists* obscure and darken Scripture, and perswade the world, that children have no right to the promise, till they are actually called. Wherein we shall use some patience to bear his abuses, and frothy traverses, to give an answer as God shall inable.

Our sense of the Scripture alleadged is this: That *ver.* 39. hath a necessary and plain coherence, with *verses* 37, 38. wherein we have an inquiry of the Jew wounded in conscience for sin, and the Apostles full and comfortable resolution of the case, to this effect; that God hath made his precious promise in Christ, to Jew and Gentile, of pardoning repenting sinners, and of giving to them the holy spirit; and that in this grace and promise, the Jew and his children had a precedency, and priority to all other people: and therefore they repenting and being baptised, should receive the mercy promised. This resolution of this Scripture, is not only pertinent to the case, but also very coherent with it self, and consonant to other Scriptures. It was a pertinent point for comfort to the Jew, that grace was tendred to all, that all scruple from personal incapacity, might be removed by such rich mercy; and it was an additional comfort, that the tender of this grace was specially reserved, to be made to the Jew and his children, before any others; as is elsewhere also declared, *Rom.* 2. 10. *Acts* 13. 26, 46. But withal it was profitable to inform the Jew (who boasted much of his birth-priviledg) that although he had a priority in the tender, yet as to the grace it self, he was but in a parity and likeness with all others; that a right frame of spirit, might keep him from being puffed up, under a mistake of that wherein his Interest lay: and this also we have elsewhere frequently instanced, *Gal.* 3. 28. *Rom.* 3. 29, 30. *Eph.* 4. 5, 6, 7. And that therefore the same common requisite, of Faith and Repentance, in order to Baptism, must be found alike in all persons, that would partake in the benefit of this grace indeed, *Mar.* 16. 15, 16. *He that believeth and is baptised, &c.* this is the Do-

Doctrine that Christ comanded to be preached to every creature for salvation, and this is the order by which it should inure to every creature, first that they repent, and then that they be baptised. And let not your mindes be shifted aside from this truth, by a pretence that the Spirit of God, in these and such-like places of Scripture, is onely to be understood of an invisible work of grace, in the hearts of the saints, and not of the principle upon which the Gospel-Church was to have its constitution. (Of which you have formerly in like case been warned.) (1.) Jesus Christ came to gather the true seed into his granary the Church, and not the chaff, Mat. 3. 12. and his fanne, the Gospel-administration, was fitted as a fanne to doe the thing according to the doctrine held forth; he came not to set up a Church after the Jewish principle, of a natural generation of the sons of men, but by spiritual regeneration to be made the Sons of God, and therefore tells Peter, that he will build his new Church upon the rock of personal profession. Mat. 16. 18. And (2.) who shall presume to lay a right in natural generation, as a principle to give an entrance into the visibilty of the Church, of which there is not one titile to be found in all the New Testament, from Christ or any Apostle? while in the mean time the Scriptures of the Prophets, and all the New Testament, doe everywhere abound with evidences that run upon a supposition of a real profession of a work of grace, as the state of the Gospel-Church: and many passages against the principle of a seed according to the flesh, the principle of the bondage covenant, as hath been premised.

2. Whereas he chargeth us with *perswading the world to believe that children have no right to the promise, till they are actually called.* It is a very odious and false suggestion, the man was ill instructed to publish it; this we say, that a right to the promise, doth not conclude a right to be baptised. We affirme that children have a right to the promise as well as the aged; but to have a right to be baptised, is not given to old or young, till the rule of the word be complied with according to which baptism is to be administred. As for his discovery of our mistake which he thus rectifieth:

Accuser.

[*Call*] hath no relation to children, but to them that are as of age (1.) Because the children are joyned with their parents in the promise, which is an intire proposition in the Text.

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Answer.

We say, that his affirmation, and his reason, are of the like worth, both made up of a meer twinkling about words; his reason supposeth, that in a continued discourse, a word in one proposition can have no relation to words without the same; which is senseless; or that there may not be more then one logical proposition, in the same coherence of matter; which is also as vain as the other.

We have not yet ended with this Scripture, *Acts 2. 39.* We lay our claime to it, as eminently justifying our practise of baptism; and that it speaks not in favour of our opposites at all; although alledged as a chief evidence against us, *The promise is to you, and to your children, therefore repent, and be baptised.* This is part of the Apostles argument to the Jew, which plainly infers this,

1.

That the reason upon which the title of the Jew, and their children to the promise was to inure, was repentance, and baptism thereupon, otherwise there lay no force at all in the Apostles argument, if the promise would inure, where there was not found, in the person the prescribed qualification of repentance, antecedent to baptism.

2.

If the children should be admitted to baptism before repentance, then the promise carries more to the children, then it would afford to the parents, although the parents title to the promise, be reckoned antecedent to the childs, and the childs title, through the parent.

3.

If [*call*] in the close of the 39. vers. is to be restrained to them afar off, and to have no relation to children, as is alledged, what a disproportion would it have produced in the converts to the Church, that the Gentiles, and their children, being comprised under [them afar off] must first be called, and then baptised; but on the part of the Jewes, the effectually calling of the parents, and their baptism, sufficed to justify the baptism of the children without calling.

Our Accuser proceeds with a long train of arguments: we cannot pick out the coherence they have, with what had been before alledged: we shall therefore take them in their course, (as the Lord shall give assistance) and make our answers to them severally, without taking advantage from their inconsequential application, either to his propositions or alledged Text.

If children should be excluded from the promise, this could not have comforted the parents, but have sinned them, that their children should be the same with heathens, but here the scope of the Text is urged by the Apostle for consolation.

*Arg. 2.**Answer.*

This Argument supposeth our denial of the promise to the children: wherein the man runs after his own mistakes: denial of baptism, is no exclusion from the promise. As to the odious comparison, of children of believers, to heathens (falsly charged on us) we reject. Heathens differ as much from the children of believers in our account, as open Apostates doe from hopeful expectants of the Church. As to the point of consolation, our denial of the baptism of infants, withdraweth from the parent no real ground of consolation, founded in the covenant of grace, and applyed by the Apostle in this Scripture; but we say that the application thereof to particular persons, if it be not according to Scripture, will prove a groundless fiction, and no consolation. And as to the infants of believers, we farther say, that besides our assurance, that the grace of election, because it is bestowed without respect of persons, doth reach infants as well as others, and it's likely more frequently the infants of the godly then others. That the infants of believers have also a nearness not only to the promise, but also to the fruition of the grace promised, by reason of many high advantages, which others enjoy not, and among the rest, that the godly to whom they stand related and are committed, have promises of being heard of God in their faithful prayers, even to the pardon of sin, *Job 1. 5. Jam's 5. 15, 16. 1 John 5. 16.* And that therefore there is great ground given to such parents of an holy hope, that God doth hear their prayers for the salvation of their infants, seeing they are not under that sin unto death, that is not to be prayed for. And we could never finde our soberest opposites, to ascribe a greater ground for a believer to conclude the salvation of his infant if he died after he was baptised, then if he did before. Besides which great advantages, there being also reserved to the children, the same tenders of grace, for their full investiture into the real fruition of the promises, we remain yet to be informed what discouragement was put upon the parent, labouring under the sence of guilt, to receive a doctrine thus tendered, bringing with it the same grace upon the

1.

like termes, to be bestowed upon his posterity, together with these high advantages promised.

We also say, Whatever benefit may be justly said to accrue to the infant by virtue of the promise through the baptism of the parent, all that would be more effectually and certainly made out to the comfort of them both, by baptism upon faith, then can be by baptism in infancie; by how much baptism upon faith, more certainly declares the parent by whom the benefit doth accrue, to be really in the covenant, then baptism in infancie can be said to doe.

Accuser.

Arg. 3. If so, then this could not encourage the Parents to submit to Christ under this administration; but would have hindred them, that their children should be excluded from the Promise, who stood in it two thousand yeers before, under the other administration.

Answer.

This Argument runs upon the same supposition with the former, (whither we refer the Reader for an Answer in part) only there is pretended to saddening, here to discouragement: here also we have the old common mistake, that an incapacity to Baptism excludes from the Promise. But to pass by these faults, we come to what may be further found a colour for an Objection.

Object. Infants stood visible members of the Church for two thousand yeers in the administration: this administration excludes them.

Ans. They stood excluded altogether, as much above two thousand yeers before Circumcision, as they do now; so that an Ordinance for their Church-membership, was not so from the beginning; but came in by special institution long since.

2. The other administration in which they stood, was established with a seed to be propagated by natural generation, according to express command, *Gen. 17. 9. Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations; this is my covenant which ye shall keep, &c. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.* But where have we command for the like in this administration? That administration was a typical, temporary, bondage-covenant; and in a figure it ministred unto the ends of the everlasting covenant; and therefore it sufficed as unto that administration, if the people, the children of that covenant, were of the seed

seed of *Abraham*, because, by that shadowy covenant, young and old, good and bad were all alike Covenanters, and all alike in a capacity to be subjects of an administration, which was to serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, till the seed should come to whom the Promise was made, *Gal. 3. 19.* as hath been formerly proved, whereunto we refer the Reader,

But the Gospel-administration, that brings Christ, and all the mystery of his grace, in the truth and reality, and not in the figure and example, is not receptive of children, as to the Principle upon which it stands, any other way then upon some visible demonstration of Faith, whereby Christ comes to be received, who are therefore called the sons of God, *John 1. 12. 13.* *As many as received him, so them gave he power, right or priviledg to become the sons of God, to them that believe in his name, borne not of blood &c.* Thus the Apostle, *Gal. 4. 28.* calls the saints of the Churches of *Galatia*, children of the promise, in opposition to the seed according to the flesh, *vers. 23.* And their mother the free Gospel-covenant, *v. 26.* And the same Apostle declareth, *Rom. 9. 8.* that the childrea of the promise are counted for the seed, in opposition to the seed according to the flesh, *v. 7.* Neither, because they are the seed of *Abraham*, &c. Whereunto many other scriptures might be added. Yea, the whole stream of the New Testament, witnesseth to a seed according to calling, and (as to the principle of their admission) all living stones, for the constitution of the Church of God, and not one word in favour of a seed according to the flesh, as to admission into the Church, upon that principle of birth-priviledge.

3. Though the Gospel-Church may not be built by such a seed, nor can be receptive of it upon that account; yet would there arise no ground of discouragement or sadness to the Jew thereby; his shadowy glory was now to cease: but real glory was set up in the place of it: and the same specially prepared, and held forth to him and his seed, as ample as ever, and by a better and more lasting covenant, to be made good upon better promises. But this glory must be received as it is tendered; it is tendered to faith, and by faith alone can it be enjoyed and partaken in, and profession the visible title whereunto. And against this change, the Jew had nothing to except, but his unbelieving minde which God determined should break him off, *Rom. 11. 20.* The change of the administration
from

from the carnal seed to the seed by adoption, did not at all abridge the interest of the Jew to the grace of God in Christ, or any privileges thereof, but unbelief.

4.

We consent thus far to the truth of the objection, that it could not be avoided, but that the Gospel should become a sore offence to the carnal Jew, that could not discern the mystery which was beyond his typical state; which exalted his nation so much above other people; and consequently his children of the flesh, who were to succeed in the like pre-eminence: and all this is to cease, and the Gentiles to be admitted into the same grace with the seed of *Abraham*; was doubtless that stumbling-block which offended many of them, as the Lord had foretold by *Isaiah* 8. 14. applied by the Apostle, *1 Pet.* 2. 5, -- 9. But what of all this? must the mystery of grace, for the gathering of the elect to Christ, be still cumbered and clouded with the pretensions of a carnal seed, which could by no means be brought to the standard of so high a mystery as Christ was come to call men up unto (*viz.* faith, repentance, laying down of life and all for Christ in or to the glory promised) rather than the Jew must take offence? we therefore deny that the argument from saddening and offending the carnal Jew, is of any worth at all.

Accuser.

Arg. 4. If so, then children would be superfluous in the Text, and so the Spirit of God would be charged with tautologies, which would be blasphemie to affirm.

Answer.

It seemes superfluity and tautologie must all be one. But we say that our denial of baptism to infants, doth not render the declaration of the right of the children of the Jew, in this Scripture superfluous; because the children of the Jew may have many great rights in the promise held forth, and yet through present personal incapacity, may not have a right to be baptised. Baptisme is a part of instituted worship, and must be administered just as the law of its institution directeth, and not otherwayes: and it had well become our Accuser to have found one little place, within some of his arguments, to have convinced us of error from a rule of the word, whereby this forme of infant-baptisme came to be a Gospel-ordinance; or at least some example of its practise in the manner he pretends unto, and to have passed by these empty notions.

Accu.

Accuser.

Arg. 5. The tense is changed: The promise is to you and your children, in the present tense; but when he speaks of the call, he speaks in the future tense, as many as God *shall* call, which must needs be applied to them afar off, and not to children.

Answer.

Must it needs be applied to them afar off, and not to children? Then it must needs be, that the Gentiles and their children must be all called before baptised, for all these are meant by them afar off, being opposed in the Text to you and your children, that is, the Jew. So that infant-baptism can have no place in the Gentile-Church by this interpretation, but must remaine with the Jewes by virtue of the promise to them and their children before calling.

This absurd disproportion cannot be shifted aside by replying that [them afar off] must be limited to the first called Gentiles: because then there could be no difference at all in the case, whether call be applied to the people of the present tense, the Jew and his children, or to the people of the future tense, them afar off; because it is consented that the first Fathers of the Jewish people themselves must be called before baptised.

This trifling dispute from the change of the tense is very absurd, as well as frothie, as supposing that the same qualification of calling may not also be requisite to the present time, because it is here set down; as required in the future not considering that calling must needs be found in the first Jewes themselves. The like absurdity is in his argument of the change of the tense, by his change of the subject, from promise to call; the promise is, the call shall be: what is all this to ground an argument upon?

Accuser.

Arg. 6. If their interpretation hold good, there would be a very great change in the extent of the Covenant, narrower under the Gospel then it was under the Law, and no notice in all the book of God given of such a change.

Answer.

Passing by the unexpressed interpretation, we shall apply an answer to this argument, as it stands opposed to our practise of baptism, as the Lord shall give ability.

1. We say, That the Covenant hath one and the same extent before, under, and since the Law, considered singly in it self: the administration.

nistration is changeable, and was often changed ; yet whatever passeth from the Believer to his Child, by virtue of the intrinsecal Nature of the Covenant of Grace, that also admits of no change ; but being so made out, we say, That all that will be more evidently and clearly ratified, both to Parent and Child, for the comfort of both, by Baptism after Faith, then by Baptism in Infancy.

2. Neither is the administration under the Gospel, narrower then that under the Law, because it admits not Infant-baptism. This administration under the Law, was circumscribed to a little Land, and a small People: the bounds of the other are stretched from Sea to Sea ; and from the Flood to the Worlds end. This was restrained to the seed and family of *Abraham* ; the other extended to the seed and family of *Christ*. This had its existence but two thousand years, upon an occasional temporary principle ; the other is suited to answer a principle existing from everlasting to everlasting. This administration was the shadow, figure, and example ; the other the substance. This was the Handmaid ; the other the Mistress. And if the case be thus between these two administrations, will any presume to charge the Gospel-administration with more narrowness, then the Law ; because of the dis-continuance of the Birth-Privilege ?

3. Although the Grace of the Gospel be extended far beyond the Grace under the Law ; yet as to Persons, the Children of the Gospel are formed to so strict and refined a qualification, that in that respect we allow the Law, a latitude beyond the Gospel ; but yet with this mark, That that indulgence of the Law was one of the great imperfections, which the Gospel came to reform, *Mat. 3. 10, 11, 12*. And of this change the Book of God doth give abundant notice, although the Accuser be informed to the contrary, *Gen. 21. 10. Cast out the bond-woman, and her son, &c.* Shortly after the institution of the Ordinance of Circumcision, for the Privilege of the Seed according to the flesh, the Lord brings forth a Prophetical instance in the very Family of *Abraham*, (the type of the true Church) wherein this great change of Church-Privilege was revealed to be taken from the carnal Seed, that it should be given to the Seed according to Grace, under the Gospel-administration. And to put that matter out of question, we have the unvailing of this Prophetical instance to the very same purpose, in *Gal. 4. 30.* so also, *Isa. 54. 1. Sing O barren thou that bearest not. What she was,*

was, the Apostle tells you, *Gal. 4. 26, 27.* next consider her husband, *vers. 5. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of hosts is his Name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel:* at *vers. 13.* you have the refined qualification of her Children and People, *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord.* Here you have a Prophetical description of the Gospel-Church-State, which the People of a fleshly extraction from the most sanctified Saints, cannot possibly compare unto, it must therefore necessarily be understood of another Seed, even of a Seed begotten of God by the Word of Truth, *James 1. 18.* the Gospel-People. And this was a fair notice given of the change in question, to wit, narrower, as to the qualification of the Persons, but more extended in Grace. To the like effect is *Isa. 60. 1. Arise, and shine, &c.* at *vers. 21. Thy people also shall be all righteous.* Another fair warning for the fleshly Seed, is *Isa. 65. 15, For the Lord God shall say thee, and call his people by another name.* What think you of this warning? Hear the Prophet *Jer. 31. 31. The days come that I will make a new covenant &c. vers. 34. They shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them.* Here is a plain notice of the change of the old administration, which gloried in the Seed of *Abraham*, after the flesh, and as plainly foretelling the cessation of that propagation, to give place to the new administration, and the true Seed of *Abraham*, the Seed according to the Spirit; and indeed the change of the administration necessarily removes the fleshly Seed, because it hath a standing by no other right then what it had under that Covenant. We shall not make use of the New Testament to prosecute this point, it everywhere abounds with evidence to it.

4. And because the Accuser placeth the force of an Argument upon the supposition of not giving notice of the change of the principle of visible admission into the Church; we also shall take the same liberty of reasoning, and say, That seeing the common way of admission to baptism in the Primitive Church, was after personal Profession of Faith; and also seeing the error of circumcising baptized Disciples, had generally overspread the Churches, and might be interpreted very much in favour of the fleshly seed, *Act. 15.* it is very strange, that notwithstanding the common practice of Baptism upon Profession, and notwithstanding the severe Confutation of this, and the like error, by Arguments plainly in dis-favour of

the carnal Seed, as may appear *Mat. 3. 10, 11, 12. Rom. 4. 13, 14. Rom. 9. 7, 8. Gal. 4. 30.* yet that in neither case, there should be found anywhere in all the New Testament, a qualification for the saving of the right of Infants of Believers to Baptism, if it had been a right, especially upon that pertinent occasion about circumcision: we therefore conclude, that there was not such right.

Accuser.

Arg. 7. If their interpretation be true, then the believing Jews, should have loss by their repentance, if their children should be excluded from the Promise, as soon as the Parents had repented.

Answer.

1. Very true, and a greater loss then that would befall the children, if the Parents repentance should exclude them from the Promise. But where did the Accuser learn that Interpretation and Opinion? we utterly disown it, and do place it among the other calumnies unjustly thrust upon the Profession of the Truth wherein we stand. We say, That the Children have a right in the Promise with the Parent; and that the Parents Repentance and Baptism, brings great advantages to the Child: but we deny that a right to the Promise infers a right to be baptized. The Scripture alledged, declares a right unto the Promise in these Jews, when they had no right to be baptized; the right to be baptized, ariseth from the instituted Rule prescribed by God's word for the administration of Baptism, and the Persons conformity thereunto. Among all the Disputes in this Question, when shall we be pressed with a rule prescribing Infant-Baptism, as a part of the instituted worship of the Gospel-administration?

2. We confess, that in some sense, a Jew converted to the Gospel should have loss, and particularly in that point of sealing his fleshly Seed by an Ordinance, together with the fall of all the glory of their Sanctuary, and pompous Priesthood, so much and so long the joy and boasting of that Nation: which the Spirit of God fore-saw and foretold, by *Isa. 8. 14.* and hence it came to pass, that Christ became so great an Offence, and the Gospel so fore a Stone of stumbling, and Rock of offence to them all; yea, even to many of them after they had submitted to the Gospel: yea, the Gentile Churches were scarce, if at all, preserved from stumbling hereat with the Jew. But all this loss well considered, would amount to no more then what befalls

befalls a man, who from the Priviledges of a Servant, is invested into the Priviledges of a Son. And this was the very case, *Gal. 4. 4. God sent forth his Son, &c. Vers. 5. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons. Vers. 7. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son.* And the reason of this change, the Apostle plainly sheweth us, *vers. 23. He that was after the bond-woman, was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman, was by promise.* There was an infinite difference in the propagation of the Seed of the former Church-state, and of the Seed of the Gospel-state; no less then between Nature, and the Power of God, as was in the Types, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*.

3. Neither hath this change brought any other loss unto the child, but, 1. The Interest which it had in the everlasting Covenant, under the former administration, it still retains. 2. The benefits and advantages which it had by the Parent, are so much bettered, by how much the spiritual state of the Parent under the Gospel, by Baptism after Faith, is better ratified then under the Law. 3. All other and further benefits from the Covenant, are more freely and fully tendered, and with many enforcing advantages, brought neer to be had and enjoyed. 4. It is an advantage, that as a token of the expiration of the bondage Church-state, their signing upon the natural birth, is also at an end; and their sealing into all these Priviledges, transferred to an Ordinance upon the visible Title of their New-birth; without which, no word of God can be found to raise them into the visible Dignity and Prerogative of the Sons and Heirs of *Sarah*, the Gospel-Covenant or administration. And it is cleer to us, That such a loss as this, was not obscurely pointed at, in the preaching of Christ, although we do not strain it here, *Luke 14. 26.* a loss of natural and carnal Ordinances, to enjoy spiritual.

4. There is no colour of warrant from the Word of God; That Jesus Christ, in the day of his appearing, did establish any one Ordinance in the Church, which did import a Communion in his Intercession, to be practicable duely by a person in an unregenerate state.

Accuser.

Arg. *Then they could have no hope of their children; for hope without a promise, is presumption.*

Answer.

1. If the hope of the Parent for his child's salvation be grounded upon the administration of an Ordinance in Infancy, then neither had the Patriarchs for above two thousand yeets hope of their children which we finde false by *Noah's Prophecie, Gen. 29. 26, 27.*

2. We demand what hopes the Accuser intendeth? and by what Scriptures the same are annexed to the administration of an Ordinance in Infancy?

3. VVe justify an holy hope in Believers, in behalf of their Children; which is grounded upon plain Scriptures, without Infant-Baptism.

4. VVe say, That this Argument seemeth to carry in it this conclusion, That Christian People, by Infants Baptism, are by Scripture-grounded assured, according to Gospel-hope, of the Salvation of their Children: there wants a proof for it; and we suppose, it is not received as a Truth by many that oppose us in this Point.

5. His Argument supposeth, That to be without Infants Baptism, will infer a being without the Promise; but that hath been often disclaimed.

Accuser.

Arg. 9. If children should be excluded from the Promise, let any man breathing shew me what priviledge the Children of repenting Parents have above others? Now it is cleer, the Apostle adds children in the Text, to shew that they had some special priviledge above those that were uncalled.

Answer.

1. The supposition of this Argument is, That the denial of Baptism to the Infants of repenting Parents, deprives them of all Priviledges above the Infants of Persons uncalled: but this suggestion hath been formerly replied unto, in our Answer to the Accuser's second Argument; where also, many high Priviledges of the Infants of the Godly, are expressly mentioned.

2. The Accuser doth not shew us how the Apostles words, [*the promise is to you and to your children*] being made use of to win an unwilling People to the Faith, do prove the Baptism of the Infants of those that are actually in the Faith, seeing it will not be granted, that a right to the Promise, and a right to be baptized, are convertible terms.

3. VVe have already set down many Priviledges of the Infants of believers, above others; although we admit them not to baptise,

time, or visible-Church membership. If we detract from them any spiritual participation in the grace of the covenant, we believe we had not been so long left under a general charge, without some particular allegation against us. But we are well assured, that no such thing in particular can be justly found against us. Besides, we know that our opposites among themselves are so puzzled about the finding out more privileges to the infants of believers, then we allow (save in the single point of admission to baptism) that although there have been sufficient demands of it, we do not know that the same hath hitherto been done: and yet still the cry is up in general words, for the privileges of the infants of believers, as if we denied their possibility of salvation.

Accuser.

Arg. 10. Then how could the blessing of *Abraham* come to the Gentiles, according to *Gal. 3. 14.* which blessing of *Abraham* was, *I will be a God to thee and to thy seed, Gen. 17. 7.*

Answer.

1. The supposition of this argument being not express, we take to be this: If the infants of believing Gentiles be not to be baptised, then could not the blessing of *Abraham*, mentioned *Gal. 3. 14.* come to the Gentiles; *I am a God to thee and to thy seed, &c.* To this argument we reply:

Two places we have in this *third* to the *Galatians*, in which the blessing of God to *Abraham* is intimated. (1.) In the close of vers. 8. *In thee shall all Nations be blessed.* (2.) And at v. 16. *To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made.* As to the first place, vers. 8. it is taken out of *Gen. 12. 3.* And because there is a necessary coherence of this authority with vers. 7. for the proof of what is here affirmed, viz. *That they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham*; and because the same proposition is also affirmed by this Apostle, *Rom. 4. 11. That he might be the father of all them that believe*, and at vers. 16. to the same effect, *Who is the father of us all*: And is also confirmed at vers. 17. by a place alledged out of *Gen. 17. 5. I have made thee a father of many nations*: We therefore say, That these two places, *Gen. 12. 3.* and *Gen. 17. 5.* have an agreement between themselves, because they both agree in the proof of the same position; viz. that they which are of the faith, are the children of *Abraham*. But although this blessing of *Abraham* to come on the

the Gentiles through Jesus Christ (as is expressed, *Gal. 3. 14.* by a continued and necessary coherence of the matter there treated of, falleth in with that which went before, quite against the title of the birth-priviledg, established by the law, and giveth it to believers the only sons of *Abraham* in the Gospel-day, *vers. 7. They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* This bold opposite hath pleased to lay aside that blessing, and to call upon another Scripture managed by the Apostle in another argument, and to annex it with this *vers. 14.* to serve his turne, but with as little advantage as if he had stayed where he was. In the interim, we deny that there is any colour of truth in this allegation, that the denial of infants-baptisme bars the blessing of *Abraham* from the Gentiles, or can be justly supposed so to doe.

2. But admitting his application, of *vers. 16.* drawn from *Gen. 17. 7. I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee,* to be pertinent: Yet it makes not a jot to his purpose, to wit, that because the carnal-seed of *Abraham* had a day, wherein as the natural sons of *Abraham* they were priviledged under circumcision; that therefore the carnal-seed of every believer should in the Gospel-day, be admitted into the visible priviledges of sons and heirs of Christ. It is a very froward supposition, that the proportion between *Abraham* in the flesh and his carnall seed, in the time when circumcision was in date, should be the same to *Abraham* in the spirit, (who is Christ) and the carnal seed of every believer in that season when circumcision is out of date.

3. What is this seed of *Abraham* to whom God doeth here promise to be a God? or what hath blinded the man, that hath considered the 16 *vers.* and cannot see what interpretation the spirit makes of his own words in *Gen. 17. 7. He sayeth not, Unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ?* Not the natural children of all believers, unless men will turne Quakers, and say that Christ is given with every natural procreation. For Christ, even that ONE is that seed, to whom or in whom the promise is made, *Gen. 17. 7.*

Objeſt. But this must be Christ mystical, and that will serve to take in the natural seed of believers.

Answer. No, it is not Christ mystical: at *vers. 17.* the covenant is confirmed of God in this Christ, the Christ who is given for a covenant of the people. Although by adoption believers are joyne-
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heires with Christ, yet are they not (and much less are their natural seed) joynt-mediators with him in the covenant. That Christ was the sole Mediator in the everlasting covenant, confirmed to *Abraham* by the covenant of circumcision; that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe, is the plain use and improvement of this Scripture in this place. But what if Christ mystical be also taken in to helpe the matter? when will it be proved that God hath made the birth-priviledg a way under the Gospel-administration, to be ingrafted into Christ mystical?

4. Take this distinction concerning the blessing of *Abraham*.

1. The blessing of *Abraham* in the letter and according to the Law.

2. The blessing of *Abraham* in the mystery and according to the Gospel.

1. According to the letter, *Abraham* obtained the blessings and privileges of the whole inheritance, which came by the Law to be the peculiar inheritance of himself, his fleshly seed and family, together with all the singular advantages which thereby were ministered among them for the calling and gathering of a seed to Christ, in an everlasting covenant, whereunto that covenant in which they stood under circumcision, with the prerogatives of the inheritance thereof, did minister, as an example, figure and shadow. The sum of the covenant of circumcision, see *Gen. 17. 10. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: every man-child among you shall be circumcised*, unto vers. 15. That circumcision was of the same nature with the Law, see *Lev. 12. 2, 3. John 7. 23*, That the Law was a covenant ministering as an example, figure and shadow of heavenly things, to wit, of the sanctuary and of the true Tabernacle whereof Christ alone was the high-priest and minister. See *Heb. 8. 1, 2, 5. Chap. 9. vers. 1. and 9. Chap. 10 vers. 3*. That the covenant of circumcision fell with the Law, see *Acts 15. 24. Subverting your soules, saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the Law, Col. 2. 14*. In this sence, the blessing of *Abraham* was not to come to the Gentiles, neither consequently the birth-priviledg, which had its institution from that covenant only, and was a principal part of the blessing thereby given.

2. The blessing of *Abraham* in the mystery and according to the Gospel, is the manifestation of Jesus Christ, with all the blessings and pri-

priviledges of the everlasting covenant to be the peculiar priviledge, inheritance & right of every believer, who therefore are called the children of *Abraham*, that the type and the substance having a mutual and respective application each to other, the minde of God might be clearly seen in them both, for the distinguishing of shadows and figures, which were to be done away, from the substance that was not capable of any change: which we are manifestly instructed in by the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 26. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ*, Jew, Greek, bond, free, male, female: mark how the Apostle resolves the point in question, at vers. 29. *And if ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and heires according to the promise.* Not, if ye be the seed of believers, then are ye *Abrahams seed*, as the Accuser would insinuate to the Reader by his half-faced argument. And this is the blessing of *Abraham*, which was to come to the Gentiles, even this, that Christ with all his benefits should be given to the believing Gentiles for a covenant.

Accuser.

Arg. 11. Then how can believers be heires according to the promise, *Gal. 3. 29.* if their children should be excluded from the promise? for the childrens right to the promise is a part of the fathers inheritance (for) the promise is to thee and thy seed.

Answer.

1. We shall not be perswaded to entertain that position, that the children of believers are excluded from the promise. We say, that as the denial of infant-baptismes imports no exclusion from the promise, so neither doth every right to the promise instate a person into the inheritance.

The Jew had a right to the promise uncalled. (1.) As God had his remnant among them according to election. (2.) He had a right to the promise, as God gave him a priority and precedence in the tenders of the promise, above and before all other people. (3.) They had a right to the promise, as they were lost sinners whom Christ came to seek and save. But in neither of these respects was the Jew an heire in the promise: such an interest and right to the promise, declares the person to be made a son by adoption; and if sons, then heires of God through Christ, *Gal. 4. 7.* a priviledge which no title of the natural father can prefer a creature unto in the Gospel-administration.

2. The Scripture made use of for infant-baptisme in this argument

is this, *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abram's seed, and heirs, according to the promise* : and the application of this Authority, is made by way of question : *If Infants of believers may not be baptized, then how can believers be heirs* ? And hath the person this Scripture in his eye, and yet pretends himself unprovided of an answer ? How plainly doth this Scripture lay the Title of the Heir upon this conditional qualification, of being Christs ? He that is Christs, is an heir by this Text, be his Children never so great aliens and strangers.

3. But saith he, *The childrens right to the promise, is part of the fathers inheritance* : for the promise is to thee, and to thy seed. His meaning seemeth to be this : If the Father be Christs, and so cometh to be an Heir, then the promise carrieth the same Title to the Inheritance, down to the children : which is all one, as if he had said, That if the Father be a Son of *Abraham*, (which in Gospel-construction is a believer) then the child must be a Son of *Abraham*, and a believer also ; even by his Birth-Privilege, and not by Faith : directly confronting many Scriptures, which restrain the blessing of Sonship to *Abraham*, and the Inheritance in all manner of persons to Faith in Christ, *Gal. 3. 9. They which are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham* : not, they which are the Children of Believers. And in the Text alleged, *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams* : not, if ye be children of believers.

4. As to the interpretation of that passage, taken from *vers. 16. The promise is to Abraham, and to his seed* ; besides what hath been said in answer to the tenth Argument, we say, that the application of this Scripture must be made between competent persons, and under their proper qualifications and respects, respectively considered. The promise was made to *Abraham*, as a common Ancestor ; and he had a noble seed, to whom the blessing, as an Inheritance did inure ; but under this qualification, as they were his natural seed, privileged under the typical administration : by which this Prerogative was so settled. Now, to improve this Scripture aright, the heavenly mystery veiled in this dispensation, must be sought out : and first we must finde the common Ancestor, and him the Apostle discovers to us to be Christ ; *if Christs, then Abraham's seed. vers. 29.* So then, although *Abraham* stood a Father of many Nations, under the Law, yet Christ is the onely Father, the

everlasting Father under the Gospel-administration : and this Ancestor hath also his Seed more nobly descended , then the Seed of *Abraham* : *they are all the Sons of God by faith in Christ*, verſ. 26. Yea, it is impoſſible, that by any other qualification, men can come to be the Sons of this Ancestor, then by being made one with him in the participation of the everlasting Grace of the unchangeable Covenant. Now then, it is an incompetent application of perſons , to compare every particular believer and his children to *Abraham*, the common Ancestor of a whole adminiſtration , and the Seed privileged thereby : and no leſs incompetent , is the application of the qualification requiſite in perſons to be accounted heirs , that becauſe it ſufficed to *Abraham's* heirs , that they were the Sons of his natural Generation , and thereby made capable of an Inheritance in the figure, and in the letter ; that therefore it ſufficeth, by being the child according to natural generation of any believer , to be upon that account an heir of God, and joynt-heir with Chriſt , in the very ſubſtance and myſtery , which the former adminiſtration did prefigure. We therefore ſhall deny the Argument raked up out of theſe two abuſed Scriptures : and we ſay, That it is an abſurd , as well as a preſumptuous reaſoning from the promiſe to *Abraham*, and his ſeed , to infer or ſuppoſe , that the Infants of believers are joynt-heirs with Chriſt and their godly Parents , under the adminiſtration of Grace, becauſe of the Birth-Priviledge given to *Abraham*, and his Seed by the Law.

Accuſer.

Arg. 12. Laſtly, If children be excluded from the promiſe , it ſeems the Apoſtle went about rather to deceive his hearers, then to inform them : it's very unlikely, the Apoſtle would uſe the ſame dialect of the Covenant , that was formerly uſed to Abraham, (I am thy God , and the God of thy ſeed : the promiſe is to you and your children) if it had been his mind that children ſhould be excluded. I wiſh that men would with unbiſſed hearts weigh theſe things , and you ſhall ſee , that the children of believers are in the promiſe.

Answer.

1. We ſay, That the Apoſtle in plain terms tells them, That the promiſe is to you, and to your children : and in the ſtrength of that gracious promiſe, perſwades them to Repentance and Baptiſm : but what

what if Children be not excluded from the promise ? where comes in Infant-Baptism upon that account ? and this should have been the very first thing, if he had intended ingenuously to have proceeded ; and there was a fair occasion for it in the first Proposition, That the Covenant of Grace stands now in force to the children of Believers under the Gospel. But in stead of a fair proof, as well there, as all along, we have a parcel of doubtful and equivocal terms, made use of, without any discovery in what sense they are applied : of which artifice, we have frequent experience. And we have some grounds to judge, by the management of what hath passed, That the Opponent durst not open that door, lest the light thereby entering, would have manifested these, and the like inconsequential and confused reasonings : and that therefore it was thought best, silently to trust the credit of that Point, with the good disposition of the credulous Reader, having to deal with us, whom in a jeer he scorns, with the Title of *a learned company*, meaning *a company of silly fellows*.

2. What an odious and audacious inference, he here imposeth upon the Spirit of God, That *if Infant-baptism may not be concluded from the words alledged, The promise is to you, and to your children ; then the Apostles use of them is in a deceit* : we have already made known, That the use made of these words, was to induce poor grieved sinners to Repentance, as containing a Doctrine full of comfort for such, that repenting, and being baptized, they and theirs, in all generations, had Promises of Christ, and all his benefits. And what is the deceit herein ? Indeed, to promise an Inheritance in Christ to poor Creatures ; and to affix a Seal of God to that Promise, without any colour of authority by any Rule of the Word, may perhaps be in time charged as a notorious deceit : the good Lord draw all his faithful Servants out of it.

3. That the Apostle useth the like (Dialect, as he pleaseth to set it out) phrase of speech to these Infants, that God was pleased to use to *Abraham* at the confirmation of the Covenant, [*viz. I am thy God, and the God of thy seed ; the promise is to you and to your children*] is no help to Infant-baptism at all : forasmuch as the allegation of the Apostle, is to perswade the People to Repentance and Baptism ; without which, the Promise contributed nothing at all to justify a persons Baptism.

4. These words spoken by God to *Abraham*, [*I am thy God, &c.*] did Prophetically and mainly refer to Christ, and Gospel-times, to have their accomplishment for the gathering in of the Seed of God to Christ, scattered abroad amongst the Jews and Gentiles; especially, and first of the Jews; it was therefore necessary, that the Argument of the Apostle should be formed to the likeness of the authority from whence it is drawn; but still the interpretation suited to the minde of the Spirit, to wit, the gathering of a spiritual, not a carnal Seed to *Abraham*, that is, Christ.

Accuser.

Further, I observe, that the promise is to be considered two ways: 1. As it is invisibly made, so it is alone to the elect. 2. As it is visibly made, so it is with visible professors and their children: whoever is in covenant in the first sense, can never fall away; but many may be in covenant in the later sense, who may afterwards degenerate and fall away. Here let the impartial Reader take notice, that the Covenant, as it is visibly exhibited, is the ground for baptism, seeing the subjects of the Covenant internally are known to God alone. This distinction of the Covenant is clear, from Rom. 9. 4. where the Apostle saith, The Covenant pertains to them: and yet the Apostle was in great heaviness for them, ver. 2. It's clear from Act. 3. 25. where the Jews are called the children of the Covenant, and yet but few of them internally in the Covenant. It's clear, from John 1. 11. where they are called God's own: which could not be by Creation; for so, all are his own: neither could it be by special Grace; For, saith the Text they rejected Christ: then it must needs follow, that there was a visible Church-Covenant, or Covenant of Grace, visibly exhibited, that gave them a claim to God.

Answer.

He calls upon the impartial Reader to take notice, &c. so also do we; and shall take it for the point in issue between us and our Opponent, viz. whether the visible exhibition of the Covenant, the ground of Baptism, will justify the baptizing of Infants, or the baptism of Believers: and let the Reader consider the evidence, and pass a righteous sentence. The visible exhibition of the Covenant, is not that which the fancy and pleasure of men calleth so; but it is the visible way of worship, which standeth and must stand by special

institution and appointment of God himself, under known ordinances, and laws revealed in the word of God: a description whereof we have *Ezek. 43. 11, 12.* *Show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the Laws thereof, and write them in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and doe them: this is the Law of the house. upon the top of the mountain, the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy; behold, this is the Law of the house.*

Here we have a compleat description of a visible exhibition of the covenant, where we may see the Lords exactness to give his people an unquestionable plain written rule, for all visible worship, with this caution, that *the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy*: nothing to be taken from it, or added to it. So did hee first by Moses, *Exod. 25. 9, ~40.* Now we say, if such exactness were to be kept in the figure, and a suitable faithfulness was found in the servant, what exactness may we expect from Christ the Lord! see *Heb. 3. 5, 6.* Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a *TESTIMONY* of those things that were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house, which house we are. And that Christ was not wanting to us in this matter, see *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* but the administration of baptism is a very main ordinance of the instituted worship of the New Testament; and that form of it which is practised among us, to wit, to baptise upon faith and repentance, being an undoubted form instituted, and practised, by Christ and his Apostles, and no institution or practise for baptizing infants being produced: We therefore say, that allowing this distinction of the promise or covenant, invisibly and visibly made, and that the visible exhibition is the ground of baptism; we require the proof of this, that infant-baptism is a part of the visible exhibition of the Covenant in the New Testament days, instituted by Christ or his Apostles; and it is no small comfort to us, that in a day of so much contradiction, envy and detraction, wherein this truth becomes a word of patience to us all, hitherto we have never been pressed by any one argument, which doth pretend to an institution of Christ, or any Apostle, but by certain far-fetcht reasons from *Abrahams* carnal

carnal seed, and from circumcision, and suppositions of strange inconveniences imagined by men, to follow the denial of infant-baptism, and such like matters; and indeed being tryed, are found suppositions, and nothing else.

Accuser.

In a word, this must be acknowledged by the Anabaptists themselves, else how can they call themselves a visible Church of Christ, if there be no visible exhibition of the Covenant, to give men such a visible relation? for there is no claym to God but by Covenant.

Answer.

You have heard us affirm a visible exhibition of the everlasting covenant; and that in Gospel-times, the same is of another nature then it was under the Law: that now it consisteth in a clear unvailed discovery of the doctrine of salvation by Christ, and an orderly disposition of all matters relating to the same, by the rule of the written word of God, instituting the New Testament-administration: all which we thus particularly set down once more.

1. The exhibition is the only instituted worship which God accepteth; and in performing the same according to rule, we are said to do that which is right in the eyes of God, and not otherwise: *Exod. 23. 13. Dent. 12. 28.*

2. All the force and authority which it hath upon the conscience, lyeth in the rule by which it is commanded, and binds according to it, and no farther. *Esa. 8. 20. To the Law and to the Testimony, &c.*

3. God so greatly detesteth all services which himself hath not commanded, that in this respect he declareth, that he is a jealous God, who will not indure a provocation: *Exod. 20. 4, 5.* and because mans nature is prone to be inventing and meddling, God hath therefore never left his Church without certain plain and positive rules for all manner of duties, which he requireth. And this provision being as needful in the Gospel as under the Law, Christ therefore was not wanting to the Church therein, *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* And amongst other the Lords Ordinances, we find a plain rule and institution, for the baptising of beleivers and penitents; but for the baptising of infants, we have not a word: and because we do not read it neither in precept nor president, we dare not to practise the same.

Accuser

Accuser.

In this sense we are to understand the children of believers in the promise, according to the meaning of the Apostle, in Acts 2. 39.

Answer.

That is to say, these words of the Apostle, *The promise is to you, and to your children*, by him preached to the Jew, to bring them to Christ by repentance and baptism, do import, that the children of believers are in the covenant visibly exhibited: such wretched abuses of Scripture this bold person dares to affirm. That the interest of the Jew and his children before repentance and baptism is here expressed to be in the promise of Christ, is plain: but from these words to conclude an interest; yea, an actual being in the visible Church, would also conclude, that the Jew in his rankest opposition, was already in that state; which the Apostle laboured by the renders of this grace to bring him into.

Accuser.

Now this covenant-right, is a ground, which God himself lays down, why any should be baptised, Acts 2. 38. he requires baptism, v. 39. shews the reason, for the promise is to you. Here I desire the reader to take notice, how the word of command, depends upon the word of promise, and what an inseparable union and connexion there is between the command and the promise.

Answer.

It is a most false and senseless inference: the right to the promise we grant to be the ground of the Apostles perswasion to repentance and baptism; but it is no ground of a persons being baptized without repentance, neither is it so layd down by the Lord, or by the Apostle.

But observe the dealing of this man, *he requires baptism* (saith he) *v. 38. and what next? shews the reason, v. 39. the promise is to you, and to your children:* and then on he runs, that *the word of command depends upon the word of promise with an inseparable union and connexion*, without taking notice of the conditional qualification of repentance, no less in the command (as he hath devised to call it) than baptism, yea antecedent to it. What wonder, if a corrupt mind drive a person headlong to maintain a justification of smaller, by greater evils? Having first found out in the Apostles declaration of a right to the promise
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in persons, in order to conversion; that the same imports a right in a visible Church-state; That here again, he also hath found out a command for baptism (disjoyned from a command to repent) with an inseparable union and connexion, directly against the letter of the text?

Accuser.

The same reason alledged by the Apostle, why the parent should be baptised, is rendred by the same Apostle, as a reason why the children should be baptised, (for the promise is to you and to your children.)

Answer.

Let the accuser, whoever he be, enjoy what he demands: we consent to him herein, that the reason of the baptism of the parent, is the reason of the baptism of the child: but the reason of the baptism of the parent, by vertue of this right in the promise, cannot take effect at all, or for ever, without the qualification of repentance: and if the reason rendred by the Apostle, be the same for the baptising of the child, then it must bring repentance with it to the water, as the *Eunuch* did faith to *Philip*, or it can receive no baptism, if the Apostles reason be rightly alledged.

Accuser.

Nay, the very same command expressed to baptise the one, is implied to baptise the other: for if some, or any, to whom the promise is made, may not be baptised, there can be no force in the Apostles argument.

Answer.

We are not willing to contend with our opponent, about small matters, to wit, how the Apostles counsel or exhortation, *Repent and be baptized*, may pass by the name of a command. But having layd down a truth for the substance, in what he first affirmeth, we shall joyn issue with him in it. (1) we consent, that the command to be baptized to parent and child is one. Then what saith the command? *Repent and be baptized*: We answer, What God hath joyned together, let no man put asunder. The accuser was telling but now, of an inseparable connexion: he might have better observed it here, then where he sought it. But (2) Though we approve our accuser in the first part of what he affirms, yet we must leave him to himself to make good his

his reason, *viz.* *If any to whom the promise is made, may not be baptized, then there is no force in the Apostles argument.* We make no question, but that, notwithstanding the multitude of Converts at this Sermon, yet there were very many Jews, to whom this promise was made, equally with those that were converted, who persisted in their obstinacy; and thereby rendered themselves and their children incapable of baptism, upon the Accusers own Principles: nevertheless, the Argument the Apostle made use of, was not therefore without force, because they might not be baptized.

The Accuser having put an end to the cruel torture, with which he hath racked the Scripture beyond all bounds of sobriety, he leads you to see his fair fruits of better information; where, we believe, you will finde enough to discover the person's very great want of a sober Spirit, to say no more.

Accuser.

Thus the Lord satisfied me about Infant-baptism: being thus satisfied, I went to hear the publick Ministry; but this coming to the ears of the Anabaptists, there came three of their Society the next day to me, to have an account concerning this thing: I told them, If they would be pleased to come at a time appointed, I would give them the Reasons of my withdrawing from them: and accordingly they came, the Preachers, and Principalest among them; where I gave them an account of my withdrawing from them, as many of my Friends can bear me witness: which was as followeth: 1. Their denying the Children of Believers a right to the Covenant. 2. Living in constant neglect of an Ordinance of Christ, *viz.* singing of Psalms.

Answer.

Thus the Lord satisfied me, &c. and in his entrance on this of Baptism, he saith, *And upon serious enquiring into the Word, and earnest seeking of the Lord, is pleased him to satisfy me;* and a little after, *but by considering I saw their mistakes &c.* If the Accuser deserves the praise which seems desired by him, and allowed to him, of having, with much search of the Scripture, consideration and Prayer, found out and set in order these Grounds, wherein his satisfaction lay, before he departed from us: would it not seem somewhat unhandsome dealing, and beneath a learned Minister, that above a month after our Accuser's departure from us, these, our accusers meditations, should be publicly preached in that

Town, in matter and form, well-nigh *verbatim*, as he here hath written them; without acknowledging whose Collections they were? but we leave them to agree, whether the one's claim to them in the Pulpit, or the other's in the Press, shall carry away the applause desired: and go on to consider, what he Reports of that Meeting, in which he gives account of his with-drawing. The first Ground whereof, as he presents it, we have already tendered to examination. The second is our *living in constant neglect of an Ordinance of Christ, viz. singing of Psalms*. At this Meeting, he charged us, with denying singing of Psalms: now he calls it, living in constant neglect of it. About which, what our Light and Practice is (and as then in effect was said) you may take thus: We do fully and cordially own, speaking to our selves; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody with Grace in our hearts to the Lord, to be the will of Christ; according to which, holy men of God are bound in all generations to found forth his high Praises in the Church by Jesus Christ: which ought to be performed by them, being merry in the Lord, with Melody in their hearts, and a distinct and cheerful voice, expressed either in the Songs of *Moses, David*; or otherwise, as the Spirit bringeth things to their remembrance, and gives them utterance, to the edification of themselves and others, that they standing by may say *Amen* or *Hallelujah* at such giving of thanks, Unto the performance of which work, although under the shadowy dispensation, there were added Musical Instruments, and Singers specially appointed to attend that service; which are done away in Christ: And although in the beginning of the Gospels confirmation, some extraordinary gifts of the Spirit adorned it, which are now ceased; yet the substance of it abides as a duty still in force: to the which, we are not convinced, that the common artificial Rhymes, Measures, and Tunes are essential. In the practice hereof, according to the measure of the Light and Grace of Christ, the Churches and Christians accused (we trust) endeavour to be found faithful to the Lord. Although whatever imperfections or defects of this kinde, were apprehended among us by our Accuser; yet in pretending this neglect of ours, as a just ground of his with-drawment from us, he shews himself to have been a very unfaithful member, while he walked with us, in that he never declared any offence or scruple about this matter, until he had thus left us; nor yet

of

of the next thing of which he chargeth us, Thus,

Accuser.

Thirdly, For neglecting of Family-duty, maintaining it to be a mans liberty, not his duty, to pray in his family.

Answer.

What our Principles and Practises are in this matter; we have hinted before. Touching the later clause, which is here told you (but very falsely) to have been then presented by him, as the ground of his departure: as there is not the least colour, why he should lay it upon the whole Church from whom he withdrew, (much less, upon the whole of that people, whom he stileth Anabaptists;) so neither seems it so honestly charged on the person, where all the pretension that we can learn of it, is: the passages appear to have been thus: At the time he mentioneth, when some Members came to confer with him about the Reasons of his departure; among others, he gave this for one; because we denied Family-duties. It was replied to this effect: We do not deny it; but do own, and affirm, That it is the Duty of Parents and Masters fearing God, to be frequent in calling their Families together, instructing them in the Principles of Religion; endeavouring by all means possible, their Conversion and Salvation, and in their presence to spread their condition before the Lord; praying for them, that God would set home such instructions and endeavours with power, &c. But afterward, several things being debated, a Case was put: What and if the Master had an ungodly Family, in which he could not judge any one did fear the Lord, with whom he could joyn, as with one Spirit, in Prayer; whether he was bound twice a day, viz. Morning and Evening, to joyn in Prayer with them? It was replied by a Brother, That if he saw advantage might come to them thereby; and found the Lord making his Spirit free, he might so do; it was his liberty: but as to any positive command, that did binde him in such cases, the party thus speaking, said, he knew none. Upon which, one in the company drew this conclusion from these words, That we made it a mans liberty, not his duty, to pray in his Family. How fairly this is inferred from what was said; and how righteously fathered upon the whole; and how certainly this instance was a ground of his leaving us (which himself saith, was afore this conference) is left to the sober Christian to judge.

Fourthly, For denying the power of the Magistrate for punishing evil-doers, (to wit, Quakers.)

Answer.

What the Principles of the people, whom he in the general accusation are in this point, is full well known to the world, by their confessions of Faith, particularly that of the Congregations in London, Art. 47. the words are these, *A civil Magistrate is an Ordinance of God set up by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well, and that in all lawful things commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake; and that we are to make supplication for Kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, Rom. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 1 Tim. 2.*

As for this particular Congregation, they have not onely explicitly testified their Fellowship, with these Churches in this Profession of Faith: but it is well known to the Accuser, that several Members have, and as occasion offers, still do address themselves to the Magistracy in that place, for their punishment and reformation of such disorders as fall under their Observation. Oaely they say, They are not perswaded, that the sword of the Magistrate is a mean appointed by Christ in the Gospel-ministration for the punishing or reclaiming of an erring or mis-guided Conscience, in matters that do depend upon the revelation of the Spirit. As for the people mentioned as an instance, (to wit, the Quakers,) it was affirmed by those Brethren at that Meeting, and still is, that wherein the Quakers should be found to commit any Offence against the Rules of good manners, the Magistrate hath power as fully to proceed with them, as with any other men.

Accuser.

5. For slighting the publick ministry.

Answer.

This charge is left exceeding raw; whether it relate to all the people by him called Anabaptists? or to this society in *Tiverton*? or to those members only in particular? whether it be slighting a pub-

publick ministry, as not being the ordinance of Christ ? or whether it being some kinde of testifying against that which is usually called publick ministry ? If the latter, then whether it be only that publick ministry in *Tewerton*, or else universally ? whether it be their persons, their gift or standing that is slighted ? here is latitude for the Reader to make construction as he pleaseth. Our understanding in this matter, is, we doe own and honour as an ordinance of Christ, a publick spiritual ministry or service, to be performed to him and his people in the things of the Gospel, by persons qualified in some good measure from the Lord, and called and set apart according to Christs laws in his Church; both as to that ministry of the word of reconciliation, and edification, and to that of serving tables. And though this be not as yet fully brought forth and established in that congregation (it being a falshood in scorn cast on them, that *William Facie* is their Pastor, if by it be understood a man chosen and ordained to that office) as through grace it is with some Churches with whom we have communion in the Lord; yet is it that mercy in order to which they are waiting on the Lord for more of his light and spirit, in making proof and tryal of the spirits of such among them as they have best ground to judg the Lord hath bestowed most of his gifts and graces on for that work. As for the ministry of the nation, we have this to say. We own and honour many of the men, ~~not~~ only as holy, but as such that have received gifts and graces from the Lord, which he hath blessed in the exercise of them. But as for the forme of their standing, as ministers in office in the Church of Christ, we judg it not to be according to the rule of the Scripture. Nevertheless we doe not own nor willingly allow, that in this case any should take up railing accusations, or unsound and unsavoury expressions, such as gender to strife rather then to godly edifying; but doe pray for, exhort to, and labour after this, that our speech might be alwayes with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how to answer every man. If the Accuser had the knowledg of, and was grieved with any such hard speeches either from the whole or any members, his faithfulness would have been in exercise to have testified against it in his place, while he had communion with us: his utter silence in bearing any witness of this kinde till now, was it seemes from hence, that he knew he was second to none in any language of that nature.

Accuser.

I offered to give them a farther account of my withdrawing from the hypocrisy and wickedness of one *William Facy*, who is their present Pastor: but they refused to heare, and desired I would not cast dirt to their face; I desired that they would please to give an account, what they had against me, but I could get nothing but this from them, *viz.* you are withdrawn from us, and have neglected your place among us.

Answer.

In this passage is all the colour the Accuser hath for what he pretends to be one main occasion of publishing his booke (*viz.*) that he could not have liberty to speake for himself: which was thus: at this conference, wherein his five unrighteous grounds were at large debated, he several times began to insist on what he calls the wickedness and hypocrisy of *William Facy*, which now (being at liberty in printing) he displays at large. Of which the Reader may in its place expect an examination.

The matters he maketh so large an outcry of, came to pass while the Accuser walked as a member there, who as he was acquainted with the mans sin and fall, so also declared himself fully satisfied with his being humbled in the fence of it to the dust, and publicly in the Church, praised the Lord for his repentance and recovery. But now beginning to make a narrative of all those matters in the presence of his other friends, with the same rancour of spirit, as may be perceived running through his book (it being six moneths afore, that he had so solemnly witnessed his satisfaction in the others repentance) he was desired to desist from so doing, unless he had any thing to lay to his charge, either before or since those acts, of which the Church had took such publick cognisance, and had proceeded against him with such severe censure; but there was nothing of any other kinde could be produced. In that he sayeth, *I could get nothing but this from them, You are withdrawn from us, and have neglected your place among us.* These brethren came to him not as from the Church, but upon his motion to speake with him; neither was the place or company judged expedient to open what was to be laid to his charge, (besides, this manifest withdrawing of his) it followeth not, that therefore the Church had nothing else to charge him with.

By this time he hath made his report (how righteously, let the impartial judg) what principles he found among us. That which remaineth (except here and there a repetition of what hath been said before) is only what carriages and miscarriages he met with among us, with his observations on them, and instructions to young Christians, &c. from them. All which discovery of personal failings and infirmities (should it be admitted that they are truth) wou'd not be of that weight upon the deliberated thoughts of the grave and spiritually judging man, as that he should hence condemn the profession and way we walk in; unless there appeared in the nature thereof, something of a cause producing necessarily such effects. To such a one therefore it might suffice, besides the stating of our principles, to declare in simplicity of heart, as in the presence of the Lord, that our soul loatheth such abominations, in our selves and others. But because this remaining part of the engine may do execution upon the simple and harmless ones, toward whom it is professedly directed, and our God having not left us without boldness of appeal to him, & righteous matter for the clearing our selves to men, in divers things falsely presented touching us, we presume on the readers patience to proceed.

Accuser.

Then they solicited me again to return to them: but seeing they could not prevail, they summoned me to appear before them such a day. I told them, that if I might have the liberty to bring some friends of mine with me, I would meet with them: this being granted, and the day assigned, I desired Mr. Fortescue Lowman, Minister of the word in Cadlie, with some other friends to be present: whom I found very ready, and accordingly at the same time appointed, came with me to their meeting. where were present some of the ablest of that party in these parts, both from Plymouth, Dartmouth, Totnes, Boveytracy, Bampton, and severall other parts, whom they had invited to assist them; and it is remarkable to behold, the just hand of the Lord, who will not bear with sin, nor suffer his truth to fall to the ground: as soon as we came into their meeting, it pleased the Lord to strike such a damp upon their spirits, and cast them into such a hurry, that not a man among them would ingage to justify their proceedings, but one Thomas Glais, (who was not of that society, but a teacher of a company of them at Boveytracy) in the name of the rest:

rest of the Anabaptists, desired, that all such as were not members of their society would withdraw. I told them, if my friends should not be present with me, according to appointment, I would withdraw also (knowing the inconveniency of being with them alone, when there was no one to testify the plain truth of things.) He told me, if I would deny the authority of Christ and his Church, I might: unto whom I replied, That the authority of Christ, I did own; but your authority I did deny. William Facy not willing to be laid open, joyned with this motion, and desired my friends to withdraw. Then Mr. Lowman told them, he had something to propose to them before he did withdraw, if they pleased: Thomas Glais replied, Pray withdraw, for you have nothing to doe here. So we withdrew, and one of my friends said, Report no more that we refuse to give you a meeting; which false report they have often spread to deceive the simple, and to carry on their design, by perswading the ignorant into an opinion, that such as differ from them have nothing to say from Gods word, to justify their practise. The same night came Thomas Glais (it is worth inquiring why they sent not their Pastor William Facy, if they were not ashamed of him, or he to look on me) and one of his brethren to my house, with a message from the rest of the Anabaptists, to declare that they had rejected me. Mr. Lowman being present, desired to know, by what rules they walked, to reject a man, for withdrawing upon such just and reasonable grounds, as I had before urged. But Thomas Glais refused to entertain any conference with him for his satisfaction; and told him they had nothing to doe with him. And being asked why they denied my friends liberty to be present in their meeting, according to appointment, and refused to give Mr. Lowman liberty to propose what he had to offer them: Thomas Glais brake out in a peevish fit, saying, that we had attempted to disturb them in the worship of God; and charged us with abusing the Name of God, and his people, with incivility, dishonesty, and want of knowledge; and withall affirmed, that he was employed by the rest of his brethren to tell us so: Unto which Mr. Lowman replied, If you are employed by your brethren to give us such language, pray be pleased to returne this message again, that I humbly conceive, they have done us the wrong, to appoint such a meeting with us; and when we came, to deny us our liberty to be present; and now to send such language after us.

1. We did not disturb you in your worship of God, for we did neither

ther see nor heare you about any religious exercise when we came, neither did we speake a word till you bid us depart, neither were uncivil with you, for we withdrew according to your desire. Thomas Glais being desired to shew some reason, for giving such slanderous words, replied, That he was not come to dispute, but declare in the name of their Church, that he had rejected me, the particulars of my charge, were as followeth. (1) That I had withdrawn from their society, and neglected my place amongst them. (2.) That I had vilified some of their brethren, whom I had forgiven. (3.) That I had vilified some of their brethren for denying Magistracy, neglect of Family duties, singing of Psalmes. (4) That I had abused my Father in Law. These things put together, Thomas Glais, and one more of his brethren, did in the name of the Church, declare me guilty of blasphemy (you may judge this was a learned assembly, that brought this charge to such a conclusion) and they were sent to tell me they had rejected me.

Answer.

Here you have at large his story of the Churches proceedings with him (for hitherto was onely the private advice and endeavors of particular brethren) in which he layes before his ignorant young Christian, several things, though with such reservations, as may, if need be, afford him some retreat; yet in such a way, as may easily beget a perswasion, and hath done so in many, that he intendeth they should beleieve these things in it.

1. That the Church had granted a meeting, and assigned a day, wherein *Mr. Lowman*, and others should propose in way of discourse, what they had to say in examination of our proceedings; which when they came to doe, was denied them.

2. That in order to this, the Church had invited to assist them, some great number of the ablest of our party that could be got in the several quarters of Country, far and neer, who were then present.

3. That at *Mr. Lowmans* approach, they all were stricken in such a damp and hurry by a just hand of God, that no one durst engage to justify their proceedings.

4. That the Accuser was judged an offender, and we would not give him liberty to speak for himself.

5. That this learned assembly (as he calls them) brought his charge to this conclusion, that he was guilty of blasphemy.

6. That this assembly employed messengers to charge him, *Mr. Lowman* and others, with abusing the name of God and his people, with incivility, dishonesty, and want of knowledge, &c.

At most of this affair, our selves (that publish this) being present, we can upon knowledge testify the falshood of these things suggested. All we shall do, to manifest the abuse imposed on the unwary Reader, will be, to give this true, brief account of the thing.

The accuser having dealt so unworthily with those that had endeavoured more particularly his conviction; the Church at length sent some messengers to signify, that they expected him at their meeting such a day: To whom he replied, he would not come, unless he might bring some friends with him. That these messengers withstood not his declared resolution, but rather gave way to it, as their particular opinion that it might be granted him, this is not denied; but that the Church gave any such instruction, or allowance, is not so. At that time there were four brethren of other congregations (and not one more) having agreed among themselves several dayes before, to be about that Country, and to give that Church a visit, who by providence were brought thither, not knowing any thing more or less of their expecting the Accuser that day before them, much less of *Mr. Lowmans* coming to propose any thing; nor were they sent for by the Church, nor did the Church as we suppose, know any thing of the intended visit, till after the day that he was summoned (as he calls it) and had took hold of the seeming concession, and given out, he would bring *Mr. Lowman*, &c. We being present, the Congregation desired us to assist them that day, being the usual day of the week that they met on, which we were ready to do accordingly; and having spent some hours together in prayer and exhortation, about noon-time took the Accusers case into consideration, with the rumor that was spread in the Town of a dispute that was to proceed, &c. Upon which enquiring, and it being evident, that the Church gave them that had been their messen-

messengers no such allowance, as they had given way unto; as also weighing how little it could be hoped that we should administer conviction to the Accuser, when such a rabble of people as were at the door, would thrust in about us and him; and withal, having other matters to charge him with, that were not convenient to be declared before them.

Moreover, that a true taste could not be had of the mans spirit; and what himself might be conscientiously perswaded of, and upon what grounds, if the matter should be taken up, and the time spent by any others on his half: on these and some other grounds it was agreed, we would desire any that should come in with him, not being members, to withdraw; and withal, the members were exhorted, that in case the rude concourse of people should throng in with him (which indeed proved so) to abide in their places in the feare of the Lord, and not make themselves accessarie to any confusion, though tempted and provoked so to be, by the multitude. Our Brother *Glas* also was pitcht upon to speake the sence of the whole; first, to the multitude, in case they should throng in, desiring we might enjoy our liberty to be private by our selves, there being nothing to be debated that concerned them: and then to the Accuser, to lay before him those evils which he was to be charged with, together with the proofs we had of them, and to heare what he had to offer touching it, &c. Then was he sent for, who brought in with him, and after him, such a multitude as hath been declared, who rushing in with no small incivility, as is usual where-ever such contentions are expected, the members generally sate silent as was desired, though grieved to see such provoking demeanour: which the Accuser calleth a just hand of the Lord, striking a dampe on our spirits, but we take to be a mercy, and token of love, to be kept serious and silent under such incivilities. Then did our Brother *Glas* desire such as were not members to withdraw, &c. whereat, those he calls his friends appearing to be troubled at the disappointment of their designe (which it seemes was, as some of that party have given out, mainly to have thrown in our faces the passages about *William Facy*) many discontented words dropt from several of them; to whom the answer was, Our continued desires were, they would not deale uncivilly with us, but afford us our liberty, being we had no business in hand that concerned them. It is like that if *Mr. Lowman* made any motion to speak among the rest, he had

the same answer. The Accuser, to shew his valour in refelling any manner of advice or admonition, refused to abide, though again and again exhorted to it, except the company he brought with him might remaine; speaking reprochfully of any authority of Christ among us, and with much derision: at length he with them withdrew. (At this time then, he being so often admonished to remaine, was not debarred his liberty to speake for himself. The Church then considered what was their duty farther concerning him, resolved to send messengers again to him, of whom they thought good our Brother *Glast* should be one, he being acquainted with him, and might best work on him; who in much meekness and bowels desired him to come to the Church, and heare what they had to offer to him, promising him what liberty he could desire toward the clearing himself; but he utterly refused to come, going on to speak contemptuously, as his usual manner of late had been, not only of the Church, but of the way it self, &c. This answer was returned to us (and may it not be worth noting by the way, that he makes no mention of this message wherein he was again offered liberty to speake for himself, but still refused it) the Church then considering again the nature of the evils they had in charge against him (of which hereafter) as also the irreconcilable enmity that he manifested towards us, and the way we walke in; that we were out of any capacity to endeavour farther his recovery, or to deliver him from those iniquities that he boasted in as his glory, concluded it our duty to cut him off, and reject him from the fellowship of this body. But there was not (that we remember) the least mention made of the word blasphemie, much less was his charge summed up under that denomination, or or brought to that conclusion by that learned assembly, as he is pleased in derision to call us.

As to the occurrences about the delivering the knowledge of our proceedings to him, however we are satisfied. and could make it out upon good demonstration, that it holds proportion with the rest of his book, both for the forging lies, and misrepresenting what hath any colour of truth in it; yet we judge it not worth the while to cumber our present work, or the Reader withal, it appearing at best, but an envious paraphrast on the weakness of a particular man, thereby to asperse the way he walketh in, and the whole people he walketh with. The slanders therein may be more conveniently disproved and reprov'd if need be face to face. Onely the Reader
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may know, that what passages were betwixt our Brother *Glass*, and them, about their uncivility &c. it appears, that as they were not any part of our Message, so neither were they affirmed by him to have been; but delivered by him in the midst of much discourse, as his own observation: at the sight whereof, as he had cause to be grieved, so having such an opportunity might justly complain of. As for that also about Blasphemy, as we are abused by them in it, so is our Brother: the occasion pretended to give colour to it being only thus: Our Brother *Glass*, being come to him with the Message aforesaid, began in some freeness of speech, (as far as the Accuser's and Mr. *Lowman*'s interpositions and interruptions would give leave) to set before the young man his state, manifesting, with what tenderness we had demeaned our selves from time to time toward him, being alwayes ready to counsel and admonish him: but he had persisted, notwithstanding all means used, slighting our counsels, despising our reproofs, still opposing, contradicting, and blaspheming. At this word, Mr. *Lowman*, as was his manner, interposed, Will you charge him with blasphemy? yea, you charge him with blasphemy: how will you make good your charge of blasphemy? &c. though it was answered, as both the brethren testifie, That this Expression was not the Churches, but our brother's own Affirmation of him, which he was ready to make good, &c.

And whereas afterwards the Accuser saith [*He had made sad shifts to winne the matter*] surely we need not to be so put to it, being an ear-witness to those unparalleld reproaches, that by him, and by means of him, were cast upon the way and people of the Lord, which the Spirit of the Lord doth not unusually call by that very name, 1 Cor. 4. 13. Rev. 13. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 4. though rendered in our Translation, *darnaming, evil speaking, slanderously reporting.*

Accuser.

Now that you may see the irregular Proceedings of such as pretend to Religion, and under that pretence draw away many poor souls from those means which God hath blessed for their conversion and edification; to the end, such may be warned to take heed, Give me leave to answer to my Charge, and I shall speak nothing but the plain truth; and let the moderate Judge, where the guilt lies. For the first particular of my Charge for withdrawing from.

from them : I judge it a great blessing , that the Lord hath so far opened my eyes, as to bring me out from among them : which will easily appear, if you remember the grounds I have already alledged, and shall yet urge, as well from their wickedness of Practice, as Principles, that I found among them ; inasmuch, that I wonder how the seber among them, could walk with them hitherto.

Answer.

Here he takes on him to answer to the particulars of his Charge, as himself shapeth them, after a sharp invective, of which his Book is full ; and from which our God, to whom we have committed our Cause, will deliver us : [*For the first particular of my Charge for withdrawing from them, I judge it a great blessing, &c.*] This indeed was one thing, which, had he abode, we should have laid the evil of before him, that notwithstanding when he crept in among us, under a profession, that in the fear of the Lord, in conscience and judgement, he did put on Christ ; and lifted up his hand to the most High God, that he would walk among us, according to Grace received, as a Member in the Body of Christ : that he did yet, contrary to the Law of his Relation, without any endeavours to make the Church sensible of any evil, either in Principles or Practice, or to help on their reformation ; wholly desert them, and withdraw from them : this he counteth his great blessing on the grounds alledged : to which we say, That this our Defence considered, together with the true taste of his Spirit from first to last, the Moderate to whom he appeals, may easily judge the greater Blessing to be on our hand, that we are delivered from such a one.

Accuser.

But this I shall shew you in answer to the second Branch of my Charge, which is a vilifying some members, which they say, I have forgiven.

Answer.

This was also an evil which we should have laid before him, That he (as all the Members did one by one) explicitey witnessed his being satisfied in the repentance of a sinner under censure ; and withal, solemnly gave publick thanks to the Lord, for having thus humbled and healed him, as also forgiving him freely, in the Name of the Lord ; and joyning in the receiving him into Fellowship, as a Member of the Body again ; he yet should at length, after above half a yers silence, and declared satisfaction, display all the

repented-of evils of this person with whatever aggravations and additions he could, to render him, and the people he walked with, odious to persons opposite to the way of the Lord we walk in, both pious and professors.

Accusers.

The occasion of this charge they bring against me, is as followeth: William Facy, their present Pastor walked so disorderly, his wickedness was so great, that they could do no less then suspend him; but so slightly did they deal in the business that his suspension pretended repentance, and admission again, was all within one week. Shortly after, he feigned himself mad, and began to play pranks with his wife: called a for bason to let out his blood; pretending that he would cut his Throat: goes to cast his child into the fire, which child shortly after sickned and died. Much of this, I was both an eye and ear-witness unto: for his wife came crying unto me, that she was afraid to abide with him in the house: gave me a relation of those things, desiring me to come with her to her husband. When I came, I found him on the bed: I asked him how he did; but he gave me no answer. After some time I had been there, he arose, and goes from his house. This wickedness committed by him was deemed then by the Anabaptists (as was afterward by himself acknowledged) to be out of a design to get some money from his wife, having married a widow, which kept certain Bills or Bonds of Debt in some Friends hands, lest he should consume it: for which the Anabaptists suspended him again; and in a little time received him again; wherein I was never satisfied to this day: and in testimony of my dissatisfaction, I refused to sit down with them at the Lords Table ever since. Now they charge me for wilfullying some of their members, when I spake nothing but the plain truth, in declaring against their sin; and they say, I have forgiven him, when I was thus unsatisfied in his repentance, and now judge it but feigned: for he that could so artificially counterfeite madness, could easily counterfeite sadness.

Answer.

Here he begins to entertain the Reader, with whatsoever new or old, before or since his rejection, he can invent and veer against this *William Facy*; all which, lest it should seem no other ways in the Readers eye, then the personal failings of a poor frail man, and not to be reasonably imputed to the cause or people he walks with, and therefore no just ground for his reproaching and forsaking them; he

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pins it upon the whole, by inculcating several times a falsehood, as the running verse of his distinct Paragraphs, [*yet they continue him to be their Pastor,*] and at length, closeth up the whole with this, [*--whether I have cause to withdraw, where such iniquity is indulged.*] In this the Accuser, as in his former story, about the Churches rejecting him, exposeth the Reader to a temptation of supposing these things to be a very truth.

1. That the Church dealt slightly, and short of their duty with *William Facy*, on his first evil.

2. That the Accuser himself was an eye and ear-witness to the pranks he played (to use his own words) when he feigned himself mad, called for a bason, &c.

3. That the Anabaptists judged, and himself confessed afterward, that he feigned himself mad, out of a design to get some money, &c.

4. That the Church indulged this iniquity, and so they had done the former, only suspending, and in a very little time receiving him again.

5. That this Accuser was all along unsatisfied with his repentance, as being artificially counterfeited.

6. That upon the whole, himself is not to be accounted one that vilifieth his brethren, in that he spake nothing but plain truth in declaring against the others sin.

To free such as desire to know the truth of things from the Accuser's snare, we shall only present this short account.

This poor Creature now under accusation, having walked blamelessly (as far as we could judge) several yeers among this people, in the faithful and diligent improvement of a good gift of Grace, to preach Christ's Gospel, that the Lord had blessed him with, and blessed in his hand, both to conversion and edification, was at length overcome by the power of temptation, arising from some more then ordinary crosses, in a state of Marriage, whereinto he was newly entered; wherein he (as also his yoke-fellow) was attended with trials exceeding bitter to be born: which yet, for honor of Truths sake, he greatly concealed. On a time, being overwhelmed with grief and impatience, he rent a Garment that was in his hand; and used some expressions to his Wife, that favoured of a very disturbed and passionate frame of Spirit: of which she complaining to some Members, and it coming to the knowledge of the Church

Church, they required the cessation of his exercising his gift publicly, till they might be satisfied of his repentance for such iniquity; which he tending the knowledg of abundantly, within a short time (as the Accuser sayes) they accepted of his ministering to them again as formerly.

Some time after which, the cause of his griefe remaining unre-moved, exceeding bitter and little hopes appearing to him that it could be taken away, that also which the Accuser mentioneth about writings being some aggravation of his trouble; It pleased the Lord to let out the Tempter, to tempt him to that extreimity, that upon a fresh onset of the enemy of his peace, he brake out in his wives presence (none but three being with him) into a condition as a man for the time bereaved of the use of his reason, in words not unlike his, *Job 7. 15. 16.* As if he had chos a present death, rather then life, and could have helped it on with his own hands; and had desired the same for his little one, which had been maimed and sickly before, and was now weake in the sickness of which it shortly after died, being an imposthumation that brake within it.

Of all which, together with the aggravations of it, what breakings it hath been to his bones, to the enfeebling his very outward man; what teares, what wounds it hath begotten in him and all that were round about him, That the Lord should be thus dishonoured, and the fear of God should no more rule in his heart, it is not unknown to the Accusers conscience, but our comfort is, that our God knoweth how loathsome the thoughts of the iniquity were to us, and with what impartiality, detestation, and severity we have borne our protest against it, and with what heart-bleedings we doe think of it to this very day. In testimony whereof, he himself was sometime since drawing, and was taking advice with several (long before this pamphlet was out) about the publishing a narrative of the whole; shewing the inward declensions that at first secretly took hold of him in point of his communion with God, the various temptations that then attended him, the great iniquities that at length got victory over him, with their aggravations, the Churches faithful and therow dealing with him, and the footsteps of God rebuking, absolving, yea breaking him to peeces; and yet the sweet and kindly operation of his hand, sustaining him in distresses from sinking in dispaire, and at length bringing him forth to see the light of his countenance in the face of Jesus Christ. But the publishing
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this (intended for a warning to them that think they stand) was not by some at that time thought expedient.

The Accusers pretended knowledg of these passages as an eye and ear-witness was no otherwise then thus, as himself declareth; that when the fury of the temptation was over, he came in at his wifes desire, and found him silent upon his bed, from whence after some time he arose, and went out of doors, which was all the iniquity that he saw, only he heard his wife make relation of the things to him, but that also shee did to others afterward; (might not they then be sayd with as much truth to be eye and ear-witnesses as he?) When this was spread before the Church, in all the particulars of it, both when they were alone, and when they had obtained the assistance of other congregations for advice, which was very suddenly upon it: The Lord knoweth, and the conscience of this Accuser knoweth, what dayes of anguish and sorrow they were to us all, who forthwith not only suspended him again (as he calls it) from the publick exercise of his gift, but withdrew our communion from him in all the ordinances of Christ, that hold out the peculiar fellowship of the Saints, notwithstanding he then testified, how the very morning after his iniquity the Lord had broken him for it, and with many meltings he declared it: insomuch as though the whole could not but have compassion on his misery, knowing the unspeakable distresse of spirit he was under while the temptation was upon him (and therefore were far from judging that he feigned himself mad, but rather that suffering such terrours, he was even distracted, *Psal.* 88. 15.) yet knowing how the name of the Lord was blasphemed, and seeing that Scripture *Jer.* 20. 10. verified in some from whom better things were expected, and considering how grievously such impatient turnings from the Lord were aggravated in him, who had spoken so long and openly in his name; The Church judged they were bound to wait on the Lord in separating him from the congregation for some considerable time, to see what fruit would farther demonstrate his repentance to be such as was not to be repented off. And therefore though during this censure he several times addressed himself to the Church, tendering still the knowledg of the Lords going on to humble and abase him for his iniquity to the dust, and many feared he would be swallowed up with over-much heaviness, yet held they him under that exclusion from membership, from the third day of the twelfth month, 1655.

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(when he was withdrawn from) till the 12 day of the 4 month 1656. and from thence till the 28 day of the 10 month following, they employed him not fully to minister in all the ordinances of Christ as formerly. At that time mentioned, the 12 of the 4 month, the Church received him again as a member, when each member, (and the Accuser particularly for himself, as hath been said) witnessed full satisfaction in the truth of his repentance, and renewed their love to him. And whereas the Accuser saith, that in testimony of dissatisfaction at him, he never sat down with them afterward at the Lords table; it is not denyed, but that about that time, and onward, the Accuser grew remiss and negligent in that, as he did in all other acts of visible fellowship with God; confessing but a little before his departure, that the world and relations had drawn him aside; but that he did abstaine from the Lords table as a testimony against any counterfeiting either maduels or repentance; he never spake in the least, as can be found, to any member.

Whether therefore the Accuser was not justly chargeable with evill, for running up and down, displaying all that he could finde against this member, himself having testified so amply his satisfaction in his repentance, after the Church had witnessed so faithfully against his sin, and this on purpose to render him and the Church odious, as indulging such iniquity, let the sincere judge.

Accuser.

1. He cries down the publick ministry for taking of Tythes, when as shortly after that his brethrea had admitted him to their communion and fellowship, he tells them, that unless they would engage to him 30 pounds by the year, he would leave them.

Answer.

Two things the ignorant young Christian is invited to take up from this short accusation for truth. First, that this man did at least essay to indent with his brethrea for 30 l. *per an.* or else would leave them. Secondly, that his so doing doeth justifie the national ministry in their taking Tythes, or at least condemneth him for testifying against it. The whole truth of the former appeareth to have been thus; that a member speaking to him, at a time, about his being fully set apart from other imployment to the work of the ministry by the Church; he replied to this effect, that he thought he should not yeild to it, for that he should expect a greater maintenance, then that Church could well provide for him (as the case

stood with them) which, said he, cannot be less then 30 *l. per annum*: but spake nothing of his leaving them.

This Member having occasion to speak something concerning him to the Church, related this passage, which he (being present) acknowledged was from a temptation. But put the case he had made this reasonable Proposal, it had in the whole amounted to thus much: A Pastor of a Church (as he is called) having a family, demands of the flock of Christ, to whose service he is called, 30 *l. per annum*, as that, short of which he cannot, with his family subsist among them. If this motion be justifiable, then the Ministry of this Nation must not be testified against, for compelling by Law their Tythes and large Revenues, from persons whom they judge were never fitted by the Lord for Communion as a Church in all the Ordinances of the Gospel: this is one of the Accuser's rational inferences.

Accuser.

1. *He is a notorious lyer, that makes little conscience of his word, and hath reported many untruths touching the publick Ministers of Tiverton; nay, justifieth himself in lyes when reproved. There was a young man who wrote notes after Mr. Lowman preaching upon the Doctrine of the Covenant in Tiverton: which notes this young man delivered to one of the Anabaptists, who gave them to William Facy. Within three or four days after, this young man came to William Facy, and demanded these Notes: which he plainly and presumptuously denies, saying, he had them not: but William Facy withdrawing the room, the young man espies these Notes on the Table and takes them into his hand: VVilliam Facy comes in; and perceivving the Notes in his hand, takes the Notes by force out of his hand. When the young man reported this to some of his Friends, VVilliam Facy comes to this young man, and calls him Lyer, before his Master, (the young man being then a Servant:) but the young man produced another to testify the truth of this matter, who was with him at William Facy's House, and heard him deny the Sermon-Notes. Afterward Mr. Lowman, meeting with William Facy, reproved him for lyeing: William Facy, to justifie himself, tells Mr. Lowman, That the young man had cleared him in this matter, before his Master: which being examined, was found a Lye. So here were three lyes: 1. he de-*

denies the Notes : 2. he denies that he did deny them : 3. he affirms that the young man had cleared him: which were all false. Several untruths hath William Facy reported, which upon examination hath plainly and clearly appeared so to be : yet they continue him to be their Pastor.

Answer.

Who would not think by what is said, but, 1. That the Accuser had from hence a very good ground to leave us, or at least a very good evidence to clear himself from our second head of matter in charge against him, could he have obtained liberty to speak for himself? 2. That this *William Facy* hath very many times, been had upon examination, about notorious lyes, touching the Ministers in *Tiverton*, and otherwise; and justifies himself, when convicted. 3. That he was unquestionably found in three in one matter. The deceit of the former insinuation appears by this, That whatever is pretended to made out in this his ample story, was all transacted since the time that the Accuser left us, and was rejected by us; and therefore came too late for his just vindication, in the matter for which the Church proceeded with him: but still shews him to be as the raging Sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. For the second thing suggested, if the single affirmations of such a slanderous person, without any particular instances or further proof, shall have any weight with the sober to fasten such charges, then how can the very generation of the Just stand, in man's day, before envy? Reason will prompt the indifferent Reader to suppose, that were there indeed at hand, proofs so clear upon examination of those horrible impieties and injuries done the Ministers of *Tiverton*, we should have had them inserted, as more pregnant to his business, and notorious then this of the Lad's; that the Reader is at large informed in: which upon the best light we can obtain, amounts to no more then this: There was a Sermon it seems preach'd in *Tiverton*, about Infants right to the Covenant, which had a very great similitude to, and agreement (to say no more) both in matter and form with the Accusers formerly digested and much studied meditations on the same subject above examined. The Notes of this Sermon, were by a Member (with Mr. *Lowman's* consent) delivered to the person accused, and he engaged to deliver them into that Members hand again, as purposing to give some Animadversions on them.

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Very shortly there came two youths to his house, neither of them known to him by face, one of which demanded such notes from him, as being his. *William Facy* denied the giving them to him, told him he could not have them; the lads importunity grew so great upon him, as would admit neither of denyal or delay: at length, not remembring where he had layd them, and (as the lad sayth) saying, he had them not at present: while he went into a chamber to seek them, the lad found them among other papers on the table: when the youths were gone, they reported, that he had said, he had them not in his house at present: about which when the youth that claimed them, was examined before his Mr. after he was in two or three tales, as his Mr. still acknowledgeth, and witnessed it lately in one of our hearing (who publish this) as well as before other witnesses. The sum is, put case *William Facy*, as the lad reporteth, did say, he had them not at present, thereby intending, he had them not at hand, nor remembred where to finde them at present; and the Lad understood, he meant by the words, that he had them not in the house at present: If there be not left in the reason of men, or love of Christ, a way for the serious reader to reconcile these things, without our farther enlarging, or to accommodate them to a more charitable construction and conclusion, then the Accuser doth, the business shal be left to his censure. Only let it be understood, to be far from us to excuse or plead for a willing use of such equivocal terms in any cases, as may leave the party to whom we express our minds under a temptation, to suppose otherwise then in the plainest sence seems to be intended: and we have good ground to believe, our accused friend was not at this time under this temptation.

Accuser.

Yet they themselves have given it under their hands, that he is not fit to manage a discourse to vindicate their practise and way, in which they now walk; for there was a dispute appointed betwixt Mr. Lowman, and Mr. William Facy, which was occasioned by some opposition from the Anabaptists in Bampton, where William Facy and his followers came and opposed Mr. Lowman in the Pulpit, who entertained some discourse with him before the congregation, and then

then referred it to a day of publick dispute. The Question to be debated, was, Whether the infants of beleivers were in covenant: But Mr. William Facy being desirous to new state the question, came to Mr. Lowmans house, and in the presence of several, swore upon the faith of a Christian, that the question to be discoursed, was not whether infants were in Covenant, but, whether infants were to be baptized: where you may see, that such as make little conscience what they say, will make little conscience what they swear. Mr. Lowman reproving him for swearing, told him, that the question to be discoursed, should be given under each others hand, and if he desired to have the question so stated, it should be done; the time and place was appointed, the question stated, given in writing; the Anabaptists willing to wave the business, imployed a modest man of their own party, one Mr. Nathaniel Strange, with some others of their brethren, of which Thomas Glafs was one, to come and treat with Mr. Lowman, in order to wave the dispute: Mr. Lowman desired to know the reason of their retreat: they told him, because William Facy was incapable to manage such an undertaking. Mr. Lowman asked, if they would give it under their hands: which accordingly they did, and subscribed it in the name of the rest of their brethren, upon which the dispute was prevented, yet notwithstanding Mr. William Facy is their Pastor.

Answer.

Being led back again to a story in 1655. by it his ignorant young Christian is exposed, if he be disposed, to beleieve,

1. That though the Anabaptists hold this William Facy fit enough to be their Pastor, yet they have given under their hand, that he is not fit to manage a discourse to vindicste their practise and way.
2. That he is an open swearer, and further discovered to be a liar.
3. That the Anabaptists (a feeble flock) were sorely put to a very shamefull retreat from an appointed disputation with Mr. Lowman, and so a great advantage on Mr. Lowmans side was prevented.

This publick examination of Mr. Lowman at Bampton, occasioned by some very terrible flourishes he had made a little before in his preaching upon the point of infant-baptism, drew on the appointing a further day for a publick dispute: in which
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hurry, the question was not so clearly and distinctly stated, to the apprehension of either, but that each (while he thought he took, it seems) mistook the others meaning, and reported variously ; hence was the meeting at *Mr. Lowmans* house, to find out and rectifie the mistake ; where the conference was managed with much confidence and seeming assurance, that the one, and that the other was in the right, though in this variety ; so that meekness and moderation was not called for, between them ; neither could ordinarily, yea and nay, goe but a little way : being both in this heat, its possible *William Facy* averred it, in the faith of a Christian. Of this, they that are quick at the observation of our failings, give testimony, and that *Mr. Lowman* reproved it : undoubtedly if this were done vainly and rashly, and not in judgment, truth and righteousness, it was an evil worthy to be reproved, and the Lord will humble him in the sense of it ; but the Accusers Paraphrast on it must pass as an inference of his own violence, which we leave with his other reproaches to the Lord. Well, the question was agreed unto in writing : in the interval (for there was some long time set till the dispute should be) it pleased the Lord, for our and his humbling, to let that forementioned great iniquity of his to break out upon him, whereupon the Church, as hath been said, proceeded against him, suspended him from the exercise of his gift in any publick service, denying him also communion in the body ; by means whereof they were (and well might be) at a loss about the manner of carrying on the appointed disputation, which either he must be left to manage a'one without any countenance or conjunction of theirs, or else some other by *Mr. Lowmans* consent must supply his place in that appointment, or otherwise some way of treaty for the cessation of it for the time. The former could not be thought any way expedient, and therefore two or three brethren were desired to confer with *Mr. Lowman*, either about exchanging his antagonist, or waiving the dispute for the time : the result of which modest conference, was the mutual subscription of the inwritten paper. *Whereas there was intended a dispute betwixt Mr Lowman and Mr. Facy, it is upon some weighty considerations disappointed, and broken off.* (1) *We doe not eye it as the work of our day, so permit the work of the Lord to cease, while we leave it, and spend our time in that*

that which is like to turn to so little account. (2.) Mr. Facy through some more then ordinary providence, is for present rendred utterly incapable for such an underiaking. 3. Yet it hath been offered, that our retreat in this may be without manifest disadvantage upon the cause and wrath of Christ, that if Mr. Lowman would either defer the time untill Mr. Facy might be capable for such a work, or desire or challenge it from any other hands, it would be accepted, and either he or some other should be appointed to meet with him, and answer him in his desire or challenge. But Mr. Lowman weighing the little advantage which may redound to any by such disputes, as also desiring peace, not loving distance or disturbance, seeing Mr. Facy is for present disabled, who was to meet with him, is willing also, the whole business may be waved and layd aside. In token of my consent unto this your motion, I hereto set my hand.

Feb. 15. 1655.

Forrescue Lowman.

From which at first sight, things rightly considered, the serious will judge, (1.) That that fall of his which then disabled him from being judged a futable disputant with Mr. Lowman, did beforehand disable him from standing as a member in communion, much more as a Pastor in that Church. (2) And that it doth not now follow, but that the grace that hath restored him to be a member, and enabled him again to improve his gift of grace to edification, may also sufficiently enable him to answer to Mr. Lowmans desires, if need be, and they yet remain with him, to vindicate the way and practise that we walk in. As also (3.) That though Mr. Lowman was treated with all by us, yet had he reasons also of his own, leading him to a willingness to lay that disputation aside.

Accuser.

I wish that the plain-hearted among them, would but seriously consider, whether they can possibly expect a blessing from heaven, under such a mans ministry, whose course I have a little hinted to you: and judge you, whether I have not cause to withdraw, where such iniquity is indulged.

Answer.

Here you have his conclusion with William Facy, and now upon the whole of what is said, either in disance or defence of him

him (though we might say much more in the words of truth and soberness) it would appear that the man is a poor sinner, that stands in dayly need of his Saviour, compassed about with weakneses, temptations, and tribulations of all kindes : without are fightings, within are fears : whose footsteps are watched, and the iniquity of them written in his forehead, who was left for a season under the power of the Tempter, fell in a grievous manner ; was sharply rebuked of God, severely censured by the Church, to the breaking of his bones ; so that he hath neither the perfection of the flesh, nor the honor of the world left him to glory in. And yet being graciously delivered by Love, and upheld by Divine power from perishing by sin, or sinking, is at length brought out to declare the Lords praise in the midst of his Church, who being a poor plain despised people, abhorring the indulgence of iniquity, and not judging after outward appearance, but righteous judgment ; finding that God hath humbled him to the dust, remembering that they also themselves are compassed with infirmities, and liable to be tempted ; have renewed their love toward him, and can comfortably wait upon the Lord, and their waiting is not in vain in the Lord, for a blessing on the faithfull labours of him and others (despised) like unto him ; though yet they have not clearness to appoint him to Pastorship in a way of office, as the Accuser falsely repeateth often as if they had done.

Accuser.

The third particular of my charge is, for charging some of the Anabaptists with denying Magistrates, and the neglecting of Family-duties, and singing of Psalms ; let me tell you I do not charge you without a cause, for these things abound in you at that rate, that seeing you and sin will not part, you and I must part ; and though some of you are dear to me, whom I trust the Lord will convince in his due time : yet the Lord Iesus is neerer and dearer, whose communion I must, and through grace do prize before yours : had you and I continued, its to be feared, the Lord and I should have parted ; for while I sat under your ministry, I could never find that blessing which I have found from that Ministry you despise. That tenderness which the Lord wrought upon my spirit by the publick Ministry before I came among you, did much decay, while I continued with you, and therefore it is no small mercy, that the Lord hath brought me from you.

Answer.

That which he calls the third particular of our Charge, for charging some of the Anabaptists, &c. was thus far worthy to be laid before him in the iniquity of it, that he had openly and very slanderously affirmed concerning us in the general, that we denied Magistrates, denied family-duties, denied singing of Psalms. &c. and on this ground had left us. The introduction to his Defence, is filled with such flourishes and invectives, as either we meet with, and speak unto elsewhere, or will be best answered by committing our Cause to him that judgeth righteously. VVe come therefore to consider what he saith in the particulars, for himself.

Accuser.

I. For denying the power of Magistrates, it's notoriously known to many good people in Tiverton, how you have carped at the Magistracy there, for executing their power upon Sabbath-breakers and Quakers; yea, you confessed it, and pleaded it against me, as many of my Friends can testifie, when I charged you with it, affirming, that Magistrates had nothing to do with Quakers.

Answer.

He publickly and falsely accuseth us, that we deny the power of Magistrates, or (as he also phraseth it) we deny Magistrats: his proof is, *It's notoriously known, we have carped at them for executing their power on Sabbath-breakers and Quakers.* We have in great part declared above, and still do, That we abhor the imputation of denying the power of Magistrates in punishing evil-doers: though withal we say, That it will be an hard task to undertake the justification of all the actions of persons in Magistracy, who may presume to smite and imprison, in execution of passion and lust, and not of Law: and that such things, and so acted, whether against Quakers, or any other People, are not onely lamentable, but most abominable. As to matters relating to the Conscience, and what Power the Magistrate may exercise in that respect, we leave the Accuser for answer to the publick Edicts of the Magistracy it self; without which, the Sect to which the Accuser is joyned, can claim no more Priviledge in *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, then any other Sect or party of People professing

him (though we might say much more in the words of truth and soberness) it would appear that the man is a poor sinner, that stands in dayly need of his Saviour, compassed about with weakneses, temptations, and tribulations of all kindes : without are fightings, within are fears : whose footsteps are watched, and the iniquity of them written in his forehead, who was left for a season under the power of the Tempter, fell in a grievous manner ; was sharply rebuked of God, severely censured by the Church, to the breaking of his bones ; so that he hath neither the perfection of the flesh, nor the honor of the world left him to glory in. And yet being graciously delivered by Love, and upheld by Divine power from perishing by sin, or sinking, is at length brought out to declare the Lords praise in the midst of his Church, who being a poor plain despised people, abhorring the indulgence of iniquity, and not judging after outward appearance, but righteous judgment ; finding that God hath humbled him to the dust, remembering that they also themselves are compassed with infirmities, and liable to be tempted ; have renewed their love toward him, and can comfortably wait upon the Lord, and their waiting is not in vain in the Lord, for a blessing on the faithfull labours of him and others (despised) like unto him ; though yet they have not clearness to appoint him to Pastorship in a way of office, as the Accuser falsely repeateth often as if they had done.

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Answer.

Answer.

That which he calls the third particular of our Charge, for charging some of the Anabaptists, &c. was thus far worthy to be laid before him in the iniquity of it, that he had openly and very slanderously affirmed concerning us in the general, that we denied Magistrates, denied family-duties, denied singing of Psalms. &c. and on this ground had left us. The introduction to his Defence, is filled with such flourishes and invectives, as either we meet with, and speak unto elsewhere, or will be best answered by committing our Cause to him that judgeth righteously. We come therefore to consider what he saith in the particulars, for himself.

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1. *For denying the power of Magistrates, it's notoriously known to many good people in Tiverton, how you have carped at the Magistracy there, for executing their power upon Sabbath-breakers and Quakers; yea, you confessed it, and pleaded it against me, as many of my Friends can testifie, when I charged you with it, affirming, that Magistrates had nothing to do with Quakers.*

Answer.

He publicly and falsely accuseth us, that we deny the power of Magistrates, or (as he also phraseth it) we deny Magistrates: his proof is, *It's notoriously known, we have carped at them for executing their power on Sabbath-breakers and Quakers.* We have in great part declared above, and still do. That we abhor the imputation of denying the power of Magistrates in punishing evil-doers: though withal we say, That it will be an hard task to undertake the justification of all the actions of persons in Magistracy, who may presume to smite and imprison, in execution of passion and lust, and not of Law: and that such things, and so acted, whether against Quakers, or any other People, are not onely lamentable, but most abominable. As to matters relating to the Conscience, and what Power the Magistrate may exercise in that respect, we leave the Accuser for answer to the publick Edicts of the Magistracy it self; without which, the Sect to which the Accuser is joyned, can claim no more Priviledge in *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, then any other Sect or party of People professing

Religion by the Magistrate allowed.

We utterly reject what he suggests about Sabbath-breakers, as not having the least colour of Truth; of which, had there been the least pretence to have fastned it upon any, somewhat would have been said, to render us odious and liable to punishment in this Pamphlet, or at the Meeting aforesaid, preceding his rejection, where he was not backward to load us with whatever ignominy he could bring, to bear on us, or the way wherein we be.

Touching the Quakers, what testimony we hold up against their principles is very well known to this Accuser, and divers good people in *Tiverton*, and elsewhere: what measure they have found in that town, and by whose violent importunity and instigation it hath been executed; whether to the satisfaction in point of conscience of some that did it, or whether even constrained to doe it beyond a voluntary inclination; what compassions and complaints it occasioned in many good people in that place (that are neither Anabaptists nor Quakers) are not things unknown there. The day may soon enough declare it in other places, we judging it not now our work to say any thing unto it.

Accuser.

2. *For neglecting family-duties, you cannot without blushing say that I wrong you in charging the neglect of it upon you, being conscious to your selves that many of your families call not upon God, which I can confidently affirme upon my own personal knowledg, when I walked with you; besides when I charged you with it, you affirmed that it was a mans liberty, not his duty to pray in his family, as my friends can testifie who were then present.*

Answer.

What his false accusation about this matter was, and our defence therein, are manifested above, to which we refer the Reader.

Accuser.

3. *For neglecting to sing Psalms, an ordinance of Christ, you never performed this duty in your assemblies: but when I charged you with this, you affirmed it to be no better then ballads, as my friends can testifie.*

Answer.

How wrongfully our denying this (as he presented it at first) was layed

layed to our charge, may appeare by what hath been said already to that point. Touching the uncomly comparison that one of our friends it seems made between the translation of *Dauids Psalmes*, by *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, (considering the many additions to, and subtractions from the word to make it speak in rythme and meter) and the Ballads of the Book of *Job*; whatever might be sayed touching the harmles use of the word heretofore, the Canticles being in some ancient translations of the Bible, entitled *Ballad of Ballads*, yet we utterly disapprove of the expression, and condemn it, as being unsavory and offensive: nevertheless herein may be observed the accusers perfection in the art of slander, multiplying to calumnsiate, something will stick, fathering the failings of any person upon the whole party and way, whether owned by them or disowned: being also afore-hand with invectives and fallhoods of such a nature as will require time and other helps to remove; and in the interim the slander passeth for a truth, and the slanderer for a man that hath done notable good service in making discoveries to the enquiring world.

Accuser.

I come to the fourth and last particular of my charge for abusing my father; but whether by word or deed, or in what manner, you gave me no account: but sure I am, If I were guilty of such a thing, you never reprov'd me. I must confess that when I walked with you, through your instigation I took up many hard thoughts both of my father and mother, because they laboured to convince me of mine error, yea and I left my fathers house upon this very account, as I have hinted before, but through mercy the Lord hath shewed me my evil in so doing, yet you were never the people that admonished me all the while I walked with you. But now you ask as if you would rejoyce, if you could take up any thing to reproch me, and set variance betwixt the father and the son.

Answer.

Here to avoid the supposition of his being any way guilty farther then he might father it upon the Church, he imposeth upon the Reader these things:

- (1.) That the many hard thoughts he had of his father and mother

ther labouring to convince him of his errour, were through this peoples instigation.

(2.) That upon this very account of their instigation, it was, that he left his fathers house.

(3.) That they never reprov'd or admonish'd him for any evill of this kinde.

(4.) That we rejoyce to forge and take up any thing that may reproach him, and set variance betwixt the father and the son.

That through our instigations he should have such thoughts; as it's but barely affirmed by him. so it may suffice that the thing is denyed and abhorred by us, as that which is beneath civility, and much more beneath Christianity; that any occasion of our instigation brought him to forsake his fathers house, is an evident falshood, there having been former differences betwixt his father in Law (that married with his mother) and him. On a time, about his beginning to profess the truth we walk in, his said father in law, being greatly offended with him, required him to depart from his house: after which passion was over, he desired his father in law's leave to depart by consent, which he obtained accordingly; whiles he walked with us, indeed his deportment to his parents, was much as he reporteth, but it is ready to be made good by many witnesses, that his uncomly behaviour in this kinde, being a great grief to us, was often reprov'd by severall, both brethren and sisters, as occasion presented. But in the case before us, which we had this time in charge against him, his revilings were of his wives father and mother, who not complying with some desires of his about his marriage as he expected, reprochfully said of his father in law, that he was an old knave, and that his mother in law was a serpent that lay in his bosom: of which being reprov'd by a sister that heard it from him, he gave no other satisfaction, then this; he thought he should finde them such. He was afterward reprov'd for it by a brother, but then stood in the denial of it: which being brought before the Church, with evidence of the truth thereof, they then by messengers did more solemnly exhort him to repent of such iniquity; but he manifested not any, but rather a stubborn spirit. Then was both his railing and lying judg'd worthy with the rest to be layd before him, if peradventure the Lord would give him repentance. Our unwillingness to have these things made publick, that he might be

be brought to a seace of his evil, without such an occasion of discord betwixt the father and the son, was one main reason, why we had a desire to have had him apart from the multitude in the time of our proceedings with him in the Church: and it is no small grief, that we are constrained to say thus much of him now; yet he hath compelled us to let all men know how far we are free from the horrible things he chargeth so maliciously on us.

Accuser.

But had I been guilty of every syllable of which you charge me with, how can you bring it to blasphemy? The Truth is: Thomas Glais made many sad shifts to mince the matter, when he was desired to make forth, wherein I had been guilty of blasphemy: but let all modest sober Christians judge, whether that which lies in the bottom be not my discovering their wickedness, and withdrawing from them: though I could not in Conscience continue longer with them, when God said, Come out from among them; which makes them to forge something against me; and let the Reader judge where lies the guilt.

Answer.

For answer to what he enquires about blasphemy, he is referred to what is said above: upon the whole, the modest sober Christian is called in by him, to give judgment: to whom also we gladly submit the consideration of the premises, Whether a person so abundantly discovering a rash, persecuting, revengeful Spirit; heaping up such falsehoods and misrepresentations, on the Way, on the whole Congregation, on the Member whom he had forgiven, (his own near Relations not escaping him) under pretensions of a just Ground to leave us, were not justly proceeded withal; and (after all due means, found obstinate and irreconcilable) cut off and rejected from the Congregation.

Accuser.

Thus have I given you a brief Narrative of the Principles and Practices of these Anabaptists, having walked with them and tried them: and likewise an account of God's gracious dealing, in bringing me from them, to attend the publick Ministry; and of their unjust proceedings against me in this matter. If the good Lord make it useful for the good of any poor soul,

soul, to undeceive him, and bring him into the way of God, or to prevent any from departing out of God's way, I shall rejoyce, so that God may not lose his Glory, nor any of his people lose their comfort: which if you tender, be sure to prize those ways in which you received the first Conviction, lest you one day lie down in sorrow, for going away from God, and from the striving of his Spirit. Let me ask you that have withdrawn from that Ministry, to whom ye can say, We are your work of the Lord; have you the same tenderness, the same affections to God, that you once had in former days? are not these much decayed? O return from whence you are fallen, and repent! And now I shall conclude, by giving the Reader an account of the sad experience that I have had, in two years digression from the publick Ministry in Tiverton, which God did at first bless to the awakening of my soul.

Answer.

As he draws towards his Conclusion, you have the Application of his miserable Doctrines after he hath, with some flattering insinuations, bespoken the farther attention of his ignorant young Christian (as he calls him in his Title-page) That now he may give a testimony of his fixed enmity to the way he was in, and shew farther what Oracle he hath consulted with, and what Spirit he is of; he adventures on the house top, in the sight of the Sun (under the covers of his two years sad experience) to cast upon the way of the Lord, and them that walk therein, such horrible reproaches, as the thoughts of Temperance, Righteousness, and Judgement to come, would have made him tremble at; having, though seemingly, aimed at them in Tiverton therein, yet so shot, as may indifferently reach all them anywhere that serve the Lord Jesus Christ under that name of reproach.

Under all which, as a part of our Crown, we could quietly sit down, and pray, *Lord lay it not to his charge: Father, forgive him, he knoweth not what he doth*: appealing for our Vindication to the Consciences of all serious, unbiassed, and unprejudiced Christians, that have tasted our Doctrine, and observed our walkings in the three Nations, whether the things be so, or nay; and so leave it to the God and Father of the Spirits of all flesh, who is coming out to pass righteous judgement in all such cases

cases for his poor people that wait for him. But yet for their sakes at whom he levels, who being ignorant of us, may be apt to be offended at such an impudent testimony; we present a few animadversions on the two or three first things he saith; the rest being such wretched falsehoods as we abhor the thoughts of; and delivered in such general termes, without any particular instance, wherein it is possible to trace him, we reckon not worthy any other answer then that, *Psal.* 120. 2, 3, 4. and 52. 1, -- 4.

Accuser.

1. *I do not remember that I have had our conviction, under all the sermons which I heard whilst I walked among them; but that sense of my condition which I had before, did abate, and by little and little fall away, after I turned my back upon the means, which God made use of in working upon me. Therefore I beg all those upon whose hearts God is working, to take heed of despising, or slighting those instruments with whom God is present.*

Answer.

The Reader must suppose his meaning to be either, that he felt no such thing as motions, quicknings, soule-searchings, &c. while with us; or else, that whatever of that kinde he had, they are now to be accounted no other then delusions; and so not worthy the name of convictions, or of being remembred. If the former be imagined to be his meaning, we have abundant and pregnant testimonies, how that many times he hath declared his having met with God to admiration, while he hath with us been waiting on him; so that he would not have given such opportunities (as he hath reported) for the world. But if he mindes all these to have been the delusions of his own heart, we shall not contend about it; but that likely they were so, or that he dissembled those pretensions of enjoying God. Only it further shewes the mercy we have, of being delivered from such a deceitful mamber, who either then belyed the spirit, while he owned such operations to him, as were none of his; or if they were the spirits works doth now in effect deny them. Nay, the mistake is very great, if it cannot be made good that he being (shortly upon the publishing of this pamphlet in his name) demanded by a mamber, how he could dare affirm such a thing, that he had no

convictions, &c. replied, that he never had sayd such a thing. If so, the Reader may guess what hand it's likely himself had in compiling the book; which with other evidences, if we liked to produce them, would put that matter out of question.

Accuser.

2. *I was drawn off by these men, when I was in the greatest probability of receiving good from the ministry that I ever was; for I doe remember still the impressions which were made upon my soule by those truths, which I heard from Mr. Chishol, a little before I was thus drawn aside, which did work mightily to conviction and to resolution in me: but the devill envying my prosperity, sent me this thorne in the flesh; and their insinuations and temptations did so prevaile with me that I left this ministry to attend on them, which was but a diversion from the work of my soule: and I finde that whereas before I had some things of weight upon my spirit, these were soon layed aside, and I had nothing to doe but to dispute about Baptisme, and to raile against ministers, so that my former awakenings were turned into drowsiness and dozing about questions.*

Answer.

How unskilful this man is of judging about Convictions, appears in part by what is last said; How infaitful he is in reporting them, is no less evident by considering, that when he came at first to make out among us a profession of his faith in order to fellowship with us, he testified, that the first convictions that were wrought on his soule, were through the word of the Lord held forth in the Church, after which (as himself said) for worldly respects, he went again to attend on the publick ministry, but was there met with, by some word of *Mr. Chishol*, which put life again into his former convictions begotten by the ministry with us; whereupon he returned again, and on a declaration of the work of faith was baptised and admitted. If this testimony of his was in truth, and a true work of grace was on him, then did the Lord witness to our ministry; if he deceived us in that profession, then hath the Lord witnessed to our rejecting him; *he went out from us, because he was not of us*. Whereas he lays the stress of his coming to us, upon our insinuating and tempting him, after the strictest search, it doth not appeare, that any were urgent with him at all, but that of his own

voluntary inclination he proposed his desires of communion first to a particular member (now with the Lord) and then unto the whole.

Accuser.

3. *As I found no profit my self by attending on their teaching, so I observed little to any other. Nay, it hath been not only mine, but the experience of others, who have constantly attended them as long as my self, that there was nothing but deadness of spirit to be gained there, which hath at last caused them to desert them also.*

Answer.

The Accuser doth not tell you, that those constant attenders that have deserted us were members with us (there being but his wife and one or two more since, that on that pretension have left that Church) as for usual hearers, if any of them are gone on this ground, as it's more then they have declared, so neither is it visible by any loss of number in that great concourse. But put case that (we lying under so great reproach as the Accuser hath publickly and doeth dayly wait and labour with his new friends to cast upon us) both Members of the Church and Attenders on it should be offended, finding fault with Ministers, Administrations, &c. would this become a convincing Argument with a serious heart, that God is witnessing against the way? hath it not been the common tryal of Gods own people heretofore? and at this day is there not to be observed and lamented, a spirit of giddiness taking great hold of men and things; so that the whole series of what of late dayes had on it the impression of Reformation, seeming as it were to labour and encline towards its ancient corruption? In which house of temptation we are indeed in expectation of greater tryals then these. and yet in the midst of them have this to be glad in our God for, that all along he hath not left us without several gracious testimonies of his converting and quickning presence; notwithstanding our Accuser, and such spirits as his is, may have tasted little of it, but have been filled with their own wayes.

Accuser.

4. They are very vigilant and watchful to finde out any that are convinced and awakend under the publick ministry: and when they begin to see things a little darkly and confusedly, they take the advantage of this twilight, in which their soules are so put off their commodities: where their soules have some tenderness, and yet a great deal of ignorance, they are fit to be wrought upon by them; for by reason of the first, they dare not neglect a command of God; and by reason of the second, it appears to them that it is necessary to be dipt.

Answer.

This fourth Experiment comes to appearance very big into the world, and promising great discoveries, suddenly easeth it self of six monstrous births, conceived in the wombe of it: all which, for the substance of them, are no other then the old pulpit and press-worne slanders that the dragon hath had ready in all generations as a flood to poure out upon the Lords people, who have laboured faithfully to beare their testimony and set their shoulders to the work of reformation, or to the recovery of any truth in Doctrine or practise from the pollutions of the man of sinne, against the interest and streame of the fleshly wisdom and glory of the times they have lived in. All which, as we might cast off at once, by testifying an holy detestation through grace in our hearts against the baseness of the things suggested; so need we, and shall we, say the less to them.

(1.) For that there are no particular persons instanced, who in the things layd to our charge may be made out demonstrably to be guilty; and it is our comfortable assurance, that on a faithful and impartial search they will not be found: but that the slander will returne on the Accusers head, and none be stumbled at it, unless such as may judge, that this Accusers truth and faithfulness in this narrative examined, deserves for him that he be believed in a matter of this moment upon his own word.

(2.) In that our Accuser with his own pen freeth those that are Godly among us from these things, saying toward the close *I speake not*

not this of all: for as I have said, I believe there is a mixture of godly among them, &c.] our interest is not, (our cause needs not) that we should plead for any ungodly ones, or any ungodly deeds that they shall commit: if any such shall be found guilty of the things charged, and persist in them, let them bear their judgment whoever they be; the Lord will we hope in due time discover them, and deliver us from them.

For what is said of our insinuations on the ignorant with pretensions of love from us or peace from God, pressing them speedily to Baptisme, and having all our zeale for the practise of holiness turning into that, we abhor and reject as base falsehoods, as might appeare from our not accepting the tenders of many persons desiring baptisme and communion with us, when we cannot be satisfied in some good measure of illumination in their understanding, and distinct knowledge of the work of conversion on their hearts; though we judge it our duty to be tender to the babes in Christ.

Touching our own ignorance, with which we are often branded by this our Accuser, and our shunning the light; its true we are reputed, and know our selves to be a weak and darke people; yet we declare, that through the supporting mercy of God, whom we fear, and on whom in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, we rely for help, we shall not cease to witness before great and small, as the Lord shall minister ability, and clear up our way,

That the doctrine which we profess, and particularly that point of baptizing only upon personal profession of saving faith, is a doctrine according to Godliness, and the same which was once delivered to the Saints (excepting nevertheless to our selves, and owning whatever miscarriages through personall defects, may accompany this profession of truth in this day of small things.) Neither shall we shun to testifie, that the imposing of the fleshly off-spring upon the Gospel-Church, is a doctrine without Scripture foundation. And we doe testifie, that in this faith we stand through grace, and have peace with God in it; withall, we desire the upright in heart to weigh and consider
faith-

faithfully as for God, how much the said doctrine imposing the fleshly off-spring on the Gospel Church perplexeth and obscureth the light, and order of the ministration of the everlasting covenant established by the Son of God: how it confoundeth the main distinction of the two Covenants in the different principle of their respective subjects, typified by *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, *Gen. 21. 10.* and explained *Gal. 4. 22--30.* & *Rom. 9. 8.* distinguished in plain terms by the children of the flesh, and the children of promise, with respect to the several seasons of Law and Gospel, *Rom. 4. 13, 14.* How it also darkeneth the honor and dignity which the Gospel-Ministration exalteth the Jew and his posterity unto, by confirming unto them the first renders of divine Grace by a special institution of this Ministration, *Mat. 10. 5, 6.* whereby from their former privilege of servants under the bondage-covenant, they by faith in the grace so rendered to them, obtain for ever the privilege and dignity of Sons and heirs of God, a more noble descent, then that of *Abraham*.

Neither can that suggestion, [*That baptizing only upon personal profession is a narrowing of the Covenant of grace*] be of any weight, seeing no subject which the Covenant of grace, either in the nature or present exhibition thereof, declareth and judgeth competent in any degree, stands excluded by it, although we be thereof judged, because we dare not presume in point of practise in instituted worship, to depart from a plaine known rule, to follow uncertain suppositions. Notwithstanding also our Accuser be among others come forth to mock and reproach us for it; a man that hath been our companion in the counsels of the house of God: and as *David* found that an aggravation to his afflictions, *Psal. 41. 9. and 55. 12, 13, 14.* Is it with us this day in behalf of this poor man, who may doubtless become a stumbling stone to credulous & incautious souls; but we are taught to cast our care in such a case upon God, seeing the case is particularly his to provide for; and we are persuaded, that though thousands should fall off, & be offended in this day of manifold temptations, through worldly disadvantages, yet that thereby the truth wherein we stand, should only receive purgation from the blemishes that are brought upon it by
unsta-